Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, rate your level of confidence in President Barack Obama's ability to revive the flagging U.S. economy.

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

115 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

First Day

In a first-day whirlwind, President Barack Obama showcased efforts to revive the economy and summoned top military officials to the White House.

NATION...Page 19

World's Oldest

Gertrude Baines is no stranger to attention, but she is as struck by this latest swirl of interest as people are by her age.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 24

Wage hike for 'frozen' teachers, service providers OK'd. **PAGE 2**
Businesses have a week to clean up banner signs or else…**PAGE 5**

Visa waiver program not affected by federal regs freeze

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Regulations relating to the impending federalization law, including the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program, will not be affected by President Barack Obama's decision to freeze all pending federal regulations until further review, several government officials said yesterday.

Within hours of his inauguration Tuesday, Obama's chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, issued a memo halting all pending federal regulations until they could be reviewed and approved by newly ap-

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Commerce: Foreign investors, retirees also face losing status

TASTE TEST CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students and staff at the Northern Marianas College taste and evaluate different varieties of taro for their taste, texture, and palatability. The taste testing activity, which involved more than 20 kinds of taro, was part of the NMC Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service Root Crop Project.

"Foreign investment is a significant issue because of our economy. ...One of the reasons why the governor is going into litigation is it will have a detrimental impact on our economy."

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Foreign investors and foreign retirees—just like nonresident workers—face losing their immigration status if they are outside the CNMI by June 1, 2009, when the federal government takes control of local immigration, according to Commerce Secretary Michael J. Ada.

Ada

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IN ACCEPTING 'AT-RISK' STUDENTS

'PSS violates board's policy'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Public School System's acceptance of youths who have committed serious offenses or have been charged in court without final judgment rendered is in violation of the Board of Education's policy and regulation.

This was according to board member Galvin Deleon Guerrero, who said that

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Fitial overrules NMHC, cancels school project

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has rescinded the decision of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. to approve funding for the renovation of dilapidated buildings at the Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School.

Fitial

The Board of Education expressed its disappointment with the chief executive's move in yesterday's meeting, describing it as "very disturbing."

It was found that the $500,000-plus promised by the housing board to GTC was re-appropriated for the build-

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Local

Wage hike for 'frozen' teachers, service providers OK'd

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

After waiting for more than two years, two groups of educators from the Public School System are closer to getting their much-awaited wage increase.

The Board of Education's fiscal and personnel committee has recommended for approval the Step 11 increase in the salaries of "frozen teachers," effective immediately.

According to Public School System human resource officer Ramon Diaz Jr., four classroom teachers, majority from the secondary levels, will be accorded the step-in increase beginning February once processing is completed.

These four educators are highly qualified teachers—with degrees, valid certifications, and passed Praxis—but were excluded in the teachers' compensation plan approved by the board in 2006. They were excluded from the plan because they were receiving the maximum salary offered.

Diaz said the four teachers are currently receiving $41,000 to $45,000 in yearly compensation from PSS, while the compensation plan offers maximum of $47,000 annual pay depending on qualification and credentials.

In acknowledging the present financial condition of public schools, the human resource officer said the delay in the decision was due to the comprehensive "cost-impact analysis" conducted by PSS.

"The cost-impact review showed a very minimal impact [on PSS finance]," Diaz told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that approximately $30,000-$40,000 personnel cost will be incurred from the move.

The amount, he said, includes the wage hike for service providers for special education program.

The filling in of hard-to-fill positions at the special education program continues to challenge PSS.

On top of the maximum salary offered for these posts, which is $47,000, Diaz said the board had approved a 5-percent "frozen pay differential" for service providers such as speech pathologists.

Saipan Tribune learned that about 18 special education service providers will receive the frozen pay differential next month.

"As soon as all papers are signed, we will then ask the Finance Department to release the step-in increase of these educators who are vital to the operation of public schools," Diaz said.

The board's decision recognizes the hard work and patience of these individuals serving the students.

BE WISE, KNOW *your* RISK!

Here is a quick quiz to find out your risk of a heart attack. If you don't know some of the answers, check with your health care provider.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you smoke?			
Is your blood pressure 140/90 mmHg or higher, OR have you been told by your doctor that your blood pressure is too high?			
Has your doctor told you that your total cholesterol level is 200 mg/dL or higher, OR your HDL (good cholesterol) is less than 40 mg/dL?			
Has your father or brother had a heart attack before age 55, OR has your mother or sister had one before age 65?			
Do you have diabetes OR a fasting blood sugar of 126 mg/dL or higher, OR do you need medicine to control your blood sugar?			
Are you over 55 years old?			
Do you have a body mass index (BMI) score of 25 or more?			
Do you get less than a total of 30 minutes of physical activity on most days?			
Has a doctor told you that you have angina (chest pains), OR have you had a heart attack?			

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you're at an increased risk of having a heart attack.

To learn more, visit www.hearttruth.gov
Source: The Healthy Heart Handbook for Women, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (2007).

To learn more, please call the Division of Public Health – Wise Women Project at 234-8950 ext. 2141

The Wise Women Project is federally funded by the US DHHS Office on Women's Health ASIST2010 Initiative.

O'Connor also offers free legal services to Taotao Tano's Cruz

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Attorney Robert O'Connor said he is willing to offer his legal services for free to Taotao Tano's controversial president, Gregorio Cruz Jr., if human rights advocate Wendy L. Doromal goes ahead with a defamation lawsuit against Cruz.

O'Connor told *Saipan Tribune* that Doromal made derogatory comments about the Commonwealth and the people of the CNMI and that he believes that Cruz has a First Amendment right to defend the truth as he sees it.

"I'm offended that any human rights advocate would try to intimidate those who disagree with her from expressing their opinions and views," the lawyer said.

Doromal, through a lawyer, has threatened to sue Taotao Tano and Cruz if they do not stop issuing allegedly defamatory and slanderous statements against her.

Lwyer John W. Zielinski, in a letter to Cruz, stated that his client, Doromal, has provided their office with multiple e-mail communications, letters, and other materials that Cruz had published about Doromal, to her detriment.

Zielinski said the statements are inaccurate, defamatory and slanderous and may potentially interfere with her employment contract.

The issue came up after Cruz wrote Florida Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Eric J. Smith on Jan. 10, 2009, complaining about Doromal's activities in the CNMI.

In response to Zielinski's threat of a defamation lawsuit, Cruz said Doromal and Zielinski have threatened the wrong person because he is not afraid of lawyers and lawsuits.

O'Connor said if Doromal sues Cruz for defamation, he will defend the Taotano president for free.

"I don't want her [Doromal] to think that she can intimidate people into closing their mouths," O'Connor said.

The O'Connor's law firm had also approached former House Speaker Oscar Rasa and his group, CNMI Descents for Self-Government and Indigenous Rights, offering its free legal services in filing a motion to support the lawsuit filed by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial against the federal government over the federalization law.

Worried about federalization?
Unsure about your immigration status?
Do you know your options?

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Company presents wind energy plan for the CNMI

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The world is looking at an energy price tsunami, with oil projected to reach $200 per barrel in the near future, a president of a wind energy company told a group of lawmakers yesterday, as he explained the benefits of alternative energy for the CNMI.

David van Over, president and CEO of Synergy Power Corp., answered questions posed by senators and representatives during the hour-long presentation yesterday in the House chamber.

Van Over has proposed embarking on a power purchase agreement between the CNMI government, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and Eyas Power Fund, LLC. Eyas Power would produce and supply the energy using Synergy and other renewable energy equipment to CUC.

With the agreement, consumers would not be forced to withstand the rise and fall of power rates based on the price of oil. Instead, van Over said, rates would be fixed for the next 20 years. According to the agreement he prepared, the price per kilowatt-hour would be 30 cents not including taxes or tariffs. Eyas would be responsible for acquiring the financing for installation of generation and storage equipment.

In a small community like the CNMI, reliability and costs are the key factors, House Speaker Arnold Palacios said. He questioned whether 30 cents, plus the additional four to five cents added on for distribution and administrative costs would be cost-effective.

Costs are not fixed and could vary based on factors, van Over said.

"If you came back to me and said you can only pay 25 cents, I wouldn't say yes, and I wouldn't say no. I'd go back to the drawing board," he said.

Van Over proposed Synergy's largest wind turbine for the CNMI because it would be the most cost-effective, he said. The largest generator reaches 140 feet at the hub and has a diameter of 90 feet. The blades rotate 360 degrees. The output rate per turbine would be 1,000 kilowatts. Ten turbines would equal one megawatt.

Senate President Pete Reyes questioned whether it was feasible to install the necessary number of turbines to meet Saipan's peak demand of 40 megawatts a day.

"It seems to me like you'd need a huge amount of land mass," Reyes said.

Van Over said there is another way to go about it.

"The government could tell us what is the area, and we could tell you how many turbines could fit into that," he added. Under the agreement, the government and CUC must lease the land for the turbines to Eyas free of charge.

Rep. Francisco Dela Cruz proposed an agreement where the product was tested on a small scale on island.

"The reason why I propose that, I guess everyone understands the economic situation. A lot of times we're hesitant of a PPA [power purchase agreement]," he said, adding that installing five megawatts on Rota might be a good place to start in order for people "to feel, see and touch the product."

"I don't think the community is ready for big scale alternative energy at this time," the representative said.

Van Over said he imagines his company would be willing

See COMPANY on Next Page

Help starting to pour in for sick worker

Individuals and groups from Saipan, Manila, and even as far as Los Angeles are poised to help the worker diagnosed with a serious medical condition to be sent home to the Philippines.

Geraldine Amor, 35, remains in the intensive care unit of the Commonwealth Health Center after she was diagnosed with lupus, an auto-immune disease that can affect various parts of the body, including the skin, joints, heart, lungs, blood, kidneys and brain.

Her aunt, Remy Amor, yesterday said she's thankful for any monetary donation from the local community and abroad.

Remy Amor said donations could also be coursed through her account at Bank of Guam 0203-635861, or by calling her at 484-5811.

She asked groups willing to help collect the donations for the family and turn them over to her personally or through her bank account.

Among those wanting to help is CBN Asia, a non-stock, non-profit corporation whose major thrust is through The 700 Club Asia.

Funds raised will be used to pay for the airfare of Geraldine Amor and her two sons—a 3-year-old and a 1-year-old—to the Philippines.

The patient said she is now penniless after her work permit was not renewed when it expired on Dec. 10, 2008, because of her medical condition, plus she has to pay for her medical bills and take care of her minor sons.

She has been working on Saipan for five years mostly as an administrative staff member at a now defunct restaurant before taking a job at Motion Auto Shop. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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Welcome to Saipan
Baby Joe & Justin!

IT&E
Life in Motion

"IT&E is proud to support, sponsor and work with our local athletes who fight to bring pride to the Marianas. Taimanglo, Taitano and Cruz are considered three of Guam's outstanding MMA fighters and IT&E finds it rewarding to be a part of their promising careers. These fighters have the integrity and the talent to excel and we are here to help them achieve their goals and aspirations as athletes," said Larry Knecht IT&E Executive Vice President

Helping local athletes achieve excellence on the playing field is just one of the ways IT&E provides support to Marianas's sporting community.

Car accident fatality had standing order for deportation last October

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A Chuukese man who was killed when two vehicles hit him along Beach Road in Susupe Tuesday night was found to be a deportable alien since October 2008, according to records in the Superior Court.

Associate Judge David A. Wiseman issued a written decision on Oct. 31, 2008, ordering the deportation of Rodriguez Jonas Suka.

Wiseman also ordered that Suka's travel documents, if any, be released to Immigration investigator Nick Reyes for repatriation purposes.

It was not clear why the 42-year-old Suka was still on Saipan last Tuesday despite the deportation order.

The judge issued the written order based on the Oct. 24, 2008, hearing in which the Chuukese was ordered to show cause why he should not be deported from the CNMI.

Suka appeared in court without a lawyer. Assistant Attorney General Kathleen Busenkell represented the Immigration Division.

Wiseman ruled that "by clear and convincing evidence" Suka, a citizen from the Federated States of Micronesia's Chuuk, is a deportable alien in that he had been convicted of five misdemeanors.

Court documents show that in 1998 Suka was convicted of assault and battery, and disturbing the peace in two cases. In 2005 and 2007 he was convicted of assault and battery. In March 2008, he was convicted of violating an order of protection and disturbing the peace.

In April 2008, Immigration filed a deportation case against Suka.

Suka was pronounced dead upon arrival at the Commonwealth Health Center Tuesday night.

The two drivers were not arrested or cited after traffic investigators determined they were not under the influence of alcohol and were not speeding.

Police are still looking into whether Suka was drunk.

COMPANY

From Page 3

to look into that.

Synergy is also proposing operating an assembly and tower manufacturing plant, which would produce Synergy wind turbines for projects in the Commonwealth and regional export markets. Annual orders are expected to exceed $10 million, according to Synergy's proposal. Synergy estimated it could create 50 jobs within three years.

A non-profit company, Synergy Sustainability Institute, would also be set up for professors and students in certain CNMI institutions.

Van Over, who sent the proposal to Gov. Benigno Fitial and CUC executive director Antonio Muna, said he has not heard back but is interested in meeting with the officials.

Charles Reyes, press secretary for the governor's office, said Fitial is a supporter of alternative energy like wind turbines. The governor receives many unsolicited proposals, Reyes said, and it can be difficult to determine which company is best but remains open to all proposals.

CUC was unable to meet the requirements of Public Law 15-87, which stated that 10 percent of CUC's power must come from renewable energy source by the end of 2008. By Feb. 1 CUC must explain why it was unable to meet that requirement.

Under PL 15-87, the renewable energy portfolio standard will double every two years until it reaches 80 percent by 2014.

FITIAL

From Page 1

ing of a soccer field in Koblerville.

The Education Board, in a letter to Fitial, said members were very disheartened to see the governor's "lack of willingness to put students first" as shown by his override of the board's decision.

"Your action goes against the actions of NMHC, ignores the efforts of everyone involved, and does not support the needs of students," the board told Fitial.

While a soccer field does have certain benefits, the board said it cannot fathom how a soccer field is more important than the safety of children sitting in termite-infested classrooms.

"It is not fair to continue to expose our children to such risks when there is an immediate solution readily available," board chair Lucy Blanco-Maratita said, adding that the termite-infested classrooms continue to deteriorate, putting children's health and safety in peril.

In the governor's correspondence to NMHC board members dated Dec. 17, he made reference to the $1.2 million that was earlier reprogrammed for PSS from the capital improvement program funds.

The board said that only $66,000 was dedicated to GTC from these funds; the school actually needs $379,000 for the repairs.

Blanco-Maratita said that PSS intended the funds to keep schools safe and orderly for kids.

GTC PTA initiative

Saipan Tribune learned that the parents of GTC school, through its PTA group, took it upon themselves to obtain funding for major renovations through the community development block grant at NMHC.

GTC-PTA applied and requested $540,000 in grant application, which NMHC earlier approved.

The board said that "it's too bad that all the hard efforts of parents, school staff, [and] PSS central office may have been for naught."

Like the initiative shown by the GTC family, the board asked the governor to do the same and put students first.

Vice chair Herman T. Guerrero said the governor's move was a first in the board's history. "In the history of the program, this is the first time that an NMHC decision on a project was overruled by the governor. It makes me wonder," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

'Petition to appeal'

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan yesterday reported to the board that GTC, including its PTA, will ask a meeting with the governor on his decision to cancel the important project.

Today, a petition campaign to appeal the project's cancellation will start at GTC campus.

School officials will show the dilapidated buildings to the media and signatures will be forwarded to the governor.

Meantime, PSS said that local permits for the GTC project is to date 90 percent complete.

PSS

From Page 1

a specific PSS policy states that it cannot enroll students who have committed crimes or have been charged with serious offenses without a final court judgment on their cases.

"Our policy is clear that no student shall be enrolled at PSS if they committed or charged with serious offenses. But we are [still accepting these kinds of students]…" he told the board during yesterday's meeting, citing a need to take the necessary steps to address the issue.

It was earlier found that PSS is home to many at-risk youths who are supposed to be housed at the juvenile detention center but who are mixed with the regular school population. This concern was raised by many parents as these students may influence or negatively affect other students.

Just recently, three students of Marianas High School who were charged with the murder of the school's security guard were found to have "records" and were supposedly being held at the juvenile detention.

Yesterday, PSS legal counsels confirmed that PSS is not privy to information relating to "at-risk" youths, making the public schools unaware of the presence of these individuals in schools.

"Juvenile records are sealed, so we don't know if they are convicted or not," the system's legal counsel told the board, adding that PSS remains committed in its mission to protect the interest of all children.

Unlike other states, the CNMI has no "alternative school" for at-risk youths, the reason why some court judgments allow them to enroll or return to PSS.

Board vice chair Herman T. Guerrero yesterday said that there's a need to revisit the policy to accommodate the system's need to access the "confidential information" relating to at-risk enrollees.

The board will ask the Legislature to consider PSS concerns on "at-risk" youths in passing the Juvenile Justice Act, which was passed last week by the House.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS in the past hired a contractor to provide the education of youths at the detention facility. However, this was stopped due to still unknown factors.

To best guide and teach "at-risk" students, a memorandum of agreement must be signed between PSS and the Division of Youth Services, according to Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan.

COMMERCE

From Page 1

Commerce has issued 492 foreign investor permits as of Jan. 22, Ada said.

"A foreign investor permit," according to Ada, is also an immigration status.

There are three types of investor permits: a short-term or exploratory business permit, a long-term business permit and a foreign investment certificate.

"If they plan on doing business here for, say, the next two years, and they don't need to go back to their own country, then they're fine. However, if they do need to exit to go back to their country for any reason, that permit will not allow them back in under that immigration category," he said in an interview.

A two-year foreign business permit is issued to those who have at least $150,000 in investments in the CNMI, while a foreign investment certificate is issued to those with at least $250,000 in investments.

"Foreign investment is a significant issue because of our economy. … One of the reasons why the governor is going into litigation is it will have a detrimental impact on our economy and most people kind of look at this federalization [as a way to] get green cards. It has nothing to do with it; the whole situation of federalization is a detriment to our economy. It takes away our labor. It's also going to impact our tourism markets. We'll be losing the Chinese and Russian markets," he said.

But the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the umbrella organization of business groups in the CNMI, yesterday said the loss of immigration status by June 1 remains "pure speculation" as of this time because the proposed federal regulations governing labor and investor permits have not been published yet.

On Wednesday, CNMI Immigration director Melvin Grey posted a public notice stating that persons with CNMI immigration status but are outside the CNMI by June 1 will lose that status.

Jim Arenovski, president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, said it's prudent to wait for the regulations to be published after which the public has 60 days to comment.

"I think that it's scaring people for no reason," he said.

Grey said the U.S. Department of Homeland Security informed the CNMI that local documents—including entry permits, visitor entry permits, electronic VEPs, authorization for entry for employment, re-entry letters, authorization to board and CMI permanent resident cards—will not be valid for boarding any aircraft or sea vessel to return to the CNMI on or after June 1, 2009.

Copies of the notice are posted on government offices, including the Department of Commerce's Foreign Investment Office on Capital Hill.

Ada said also to be affected are foreign retirees. Foreign individuals at least 55 years old and have invested at least $100,000 in a residential property on Saipan or $75,000 on Tinian or Rota are qualified to apply for a foreign retirees investor certificate.

"I'm anticipating the regs aren't going to be as stiff because I don't think it's the intent to pull these investors out. But what's going to be significant is currently our investors can travel to and from [the CNMI] without incident. They're going to have to comply with whatever regs the feds put out," he added.

VISA

From Page 1

pointed or designated department or agency heads.

But because the interim final rule for the visa waiver program was published in the Federal Register on Friday—before Obama took office—the regulations will not be impacted, according to Alex Hartman, an immigration policy adviser at the Department of Homeland Security. The freeze impacts those regulations that had not yet been published in the Register.

Although the visa waiver regulations are still in the comment period and will not go into effect until June 1, they do not fall under the designation of new, pending or proposed because they were published, CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan's Office said yesterday. Sablan had spoken with DHS officials to clarify the issue.

The 60-day comment period for the interim final rule is still ongoing. At the end of the period DHS will either revise the final rule or confirm the interim final rule.

Freezing pending regulations is a typical tactic by incoming presidents, federal officials said, because it gives them time to review regulations that might have been fast-tracked by the previous president.

The CNMI-Guam visa waiver program was one of many regulations published in the last few weeks of President George W. Bush's presidency. Under the regulations, citizens of the following countries will be allowed entry into Guam or the CNMI without a visa, effective June 1: Australia, Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Hong Kong. Citing security concerns, DHS left China and Russia off the list, a move that has local government officials, business and tourism leaders, and community members worried about the economic impact to the Commonwealth.

Other departments within DHS do not seem to be impacted by the freeze either.

An information officer for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, which handles immigration services and benefits such as work permits, green cards and citizenship, said there were no regulations in the pipeline that would fall under the freeze. Any future regulations will proceed under the normal process with DHS' new secretary, Janet Napolitano, who was one of several appointees confirmed by the U.S. Senate since Obama's inauguration. Others confirmed include Ken Salazer, secretary of the Interior, which oversees the insular areas, and Hillary Clinton as secretary of State.

Businesses have a week to clean up banner signs or else...

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Businesses have one more week to remove banner signs that do not comply with the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 or face fines of up to $1,000 per day starting Jan. 31.

Zoning administrator Steve Tilley, in a statement yesterday, said starting on Feb. 1, the Zoning Office will inspect for nonconforming banner signs and may issue fines to violators.

"We should see far fewer commercial banner signs and this will enhance the overall appearance of our retail and tourist areas," said Tilley.

Tilley

Banner signs that are prohibited include a retail sales event banner sign that advertises a brand name product, contains a brand name, symbol or logo, or contains a product price.

Also prohibited are retail sales banner signs that are not related to an event, and event signs with more than 40 percent of the area covered by advertising for a brand-name product, a brand name symbol or logo, or product price.

The Saipan Zoning Law of 2008 requires that all nonconforming banner signs be removed to improve the island's visual environment.

The law set a deadline of Oct. 30, 2008, for the removal of nonconforming banner signs but the Zoning Office is giving businesses a grace period until Jan. 31, 2009.

Yesterday, the Zoning Office issued a memorandum to users and installers of commercial banner signs, reminding them of the deadline to comply.

Tilley said he was especially pleased at the cooperation of wholesalers in removing nonconforming banners.

"We've had several meetings with them over the past year and they've all agreed with this effort. Marpac has already started taking down their signs and notifying their retailers about the new law," he said.

Banner signs may be used for a personal sign including a yard sale, moving sale or house rental, as well as for an event sign to advertise a parade, concert, or even a retail promotion, such as "Going Out of Business" or "June Bridal Sale."

A banner sign may be used as a temporary window sign and may include product advertising but not more than 20 percent of a window may be covered with signs.

An event banner sign may be erected without a zoning permit if it has the installation date printed in letters at least 2 inches high, is displayed for less than 30 days, is removed within five days after the event, and has less than 40 percent of the sign area covered by brand advertising, symbols, logos, or prices.

Lawmakers raise concerns about Flame Sako

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Lawmakers have met with the Department of Public Lands to discuss concerns about plans to build a multi-million dollar resort in As Matius.

In September last year, Gov. Benigno Fitial approved plans for the Flame Sako Resort Hotel and Spa with Kang Dae Sik, the resort's president. The plans call for a nine-floor, 357-room resort on 10 hectares of land on a site north of Palms Resort Saipan. The project carries an estimated price tag of $50 million to $60 million, said Department of Public Lands Secretary John S. Del Rosario.

Because of the size of the property, the lease will require legislative approval.

After looking at a draft lease, some members of the Legislature had questions, such as financing sources, and whether work can begin within six months after the lease is signed, said Rep. Ramon Tetuteb, chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

The Natural Resources committee met with Del Rosario this week to ask questions before legislative action is taken.

Lawmakers want to make sure conditions, like community benefits, should be in place before the lease is approved, Tetuteb said. They want to know if Flame Sako, like other hotels, will provide its own water and sewer and be willing to give back some of that or other infrastructure activity to the community. There have been issues with other investors not maintaining public areas like beaches, so the lease must be clear on defining maintainance, the representative said.

Also, community members, in a recent public hearing on the hotel, expressed concern about the boundaries because of the PauPau Beach, which is popular among residents and tourists, Tetuteb said.

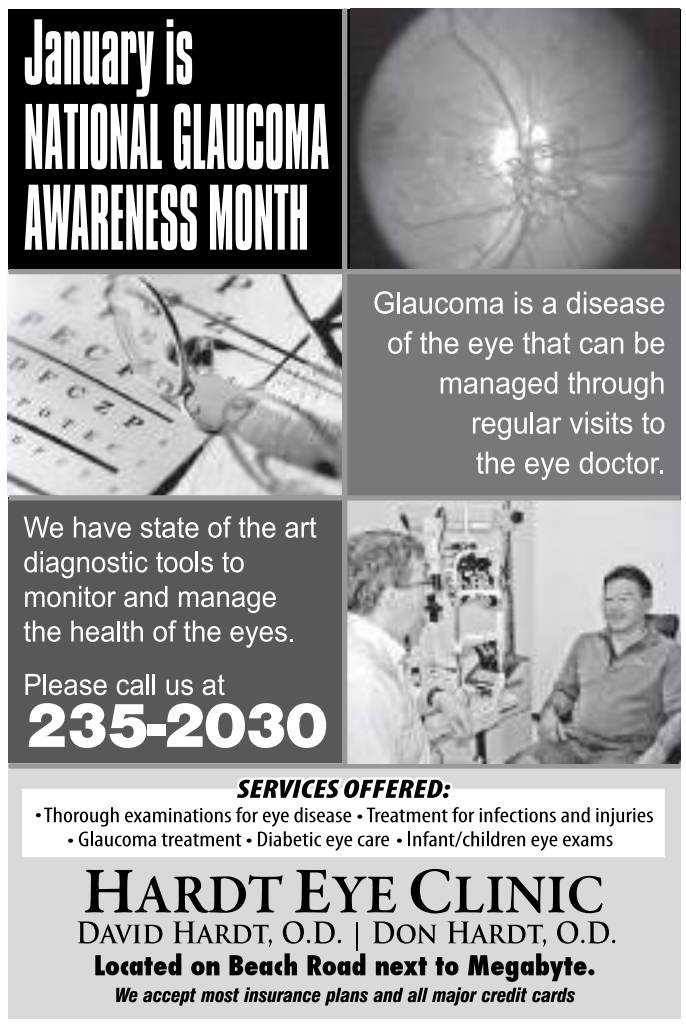
Having a resort on the site may result in residents being prevented access to PauPau Beach.

"That's a grave concern by the community there when we did the public hearing, so we want to make sure we know where the boundaries are," he added.

The next step, Tetuteb said, is for the legislators' concerns to be addressed in the lease, before it is signed and a joint session takes place. He said he anticipates the lease to be signed by the end of the month.

On a related noted, DPL's Del Rosario has written Saipan Chamber of Commerce director Steve Jang, admonishing Jang for "peddling negative propaganda among policymakers with respect to the ability of Flame Sako and Neo Goldwings Paradise to finance their projects."

Del Rosario said the investments are legitimate, and unless Jang has additional information, he could be opening himself up to slander lawsuits. Jang could not be reached for comment yesterday.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USED CARS

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TOYOTA SEDANS								
R08-015F	2005	ECHO 4DR	AUTO	59734	WHITE	ADJ-831	9,299	
R08-022B	2005	ECHO 4DR	AUTO	70447	AQUA	ADH-691	7,999	
R08-019F	2005	COROLLA 4DR	AUTO	41092	WHITE	ACD-346	10,799	
R08-023F	2007	COROLLA 4DR	AUTO	29549	RED	ACE-780	14,999	
U08-090R	2006	COROLLA 4DR	AUTO	42193	BLUE	ACJ-553	11,399	
R09-001B	2005	COROLLA 4DR	AUTO	242798	WHITE	ACB-578	5,999	
R08-008F	2006	CAMRY LE 4DR	AUTO	18576	BEIGE	ADN-161	15,999	
R08-020F	2006	CAMRY LE 4DR	AUTO	50052	RED	ADO-831	15,999	
U08-043P	2000	CELICA 2DR	MANUAL	72097	BLUE	ABZ-838	7,999	
R08-021F	2005	MATRIX BASE	AUTO	68931	RED	ACD-510	9,999	
GM CARS								
R08-014F	2006	AVEO 4DR.	AUTO	33945	WHITE	ADS-642	9,999	
R07-013F	2005	AVEO HATCHBACK	AUTO	39164	ORANGE	ADO-022	~~9,599~~	6,899
R07-034F	2005	OPTRA 4DR.	AUTO	14592	SILVER	ACD-020	~~10,999~~	9,499
U08-087R	2005	EPICA 4DR	AUTO	26553	OLIVE	ACB-027	5,999	
LEXUS								
U08-067P	1995	LEXUS LS400	AUTO	24762	WHITE	ABS-062	11,399	
OTHER CARS & TRUCKS								
U07-034T	2000	NISSAN MAXIMA GXE 4DR.	AUTO	68648	WHITE	ACT-812	~~10,999~~	8,399
U07-104T	2003	NISSAN MURANO SE	AUTO	32000	PEWT	ABZ-615	~~16,799~~	15,299
U08-038T	2001	MITS MONTERO WGN	AUTO	93155	BEIGE	CVS-88	7,999	
U07-095T	1999	MAZDA MILLENIA 4DR.SEDAN	AUTO	91014	BEIGE	ABP-583	~~7,999~~	4,899
GM VAN								
R08-017F	2003	EXPRESS VAN	AUTO	117560	WHITE	BUS-1077	9,499	
SPORT UTILITY								
U07-050T	2002	RAV4 4DR 4WD	AUTO	39182	WHITE	ABW-677	~~13,699~~	12,799

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WATERCLOSET $78 UP • SINK $29 UP
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2X4X14 - $4.75	2X4X14 - $7.30
2X4X16 - $5.30	2X4X16 - $8.70
2X4X18 - $5.95	2X4X18 - $9.70
2X4X20 - $6.60	2X4X20 - $10.70
2X6X12 - $6.90	2X6X12 - $10.20
2X6X14 - $7.90	2X6X14 - $12.20
2X6X16 - $8.90	2X6X16 - $14.20
2X6X18 - $9.90	2X6X18 - $15.20
2X6X20 - $10.90	2X6X20 - $17.20

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'Foreign businessmen, students must have US visas to return to NMI'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Foreign businessmen and students in the CNMI can go out of the Commonwealth on or after June 1, 2009, but when they come back they must have U.S. visas, according to local Immigration Director Melvin Grey yesterday.

Grey also disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* that his office received a lot of calls from alien workers and employers inquiring about the issue after he posted a public notice on Tuesday about the situation when the federalization law takes effect on June 1.

Grey said officials of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security were in the CNMI last week and had three separate meetings with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the Legislature, and the public.

The director said that in those meetings and during personal side conversations with the federal officials, they discussed the direction the federal agencies are going and what they expect to happen on or after June 1.

"Entry permits will be recognized as valid as long as you remain within the CNMI. If you are outside the CNMI on or after June 1st and you want to come back, you have to come back with a U.S. visa. And then you have to come in and comply with the conditions of that visa," Grey said.

"So if you are a businessman or any other person who is here on a CNMI status, if you also have a U.S. visitor's visa classifications B1 or B2 and you are outside, you can come back in the CNMI using that visa but you can't resume your CNMI status because that visa is for tourists and you will be working without authorization, subject to deportation," he said.

As for alien workers who need to go out of the CNMI for medical purposes, to attend important family functions, or burials, Grey said they brought up all these issues with the federal agencies, including the situation of those having Immediate Relative status.

"But the feds did not accommodate us," Grey said.

In all those three meetings, he said, those issues were raised and the responses were the same.

"People are now saying, 'Are you serious? Do you realize what that means?' Businessmen can't go out. And somebody specifically asked about the status of students. Students can go home, yes, anybody can depart but when they come back they have to have a U.S. visa," Grey said.

"So a businessman going out, when the CNMI status goes out, once he comes back on hisU.S visitors visa, he is a tourist," he said.

Grey said they also told federal officials about the significant impact on airlines since alien workers will not be going home for short trips.

"We told them, you;ve got to stop and think about this. This has ripple effects as they implement this stuff. We raised all these issues. And the response we get is 'Well, this is the way it is,'" the director said.

IRs being encouraged to sign two petitions for Homeland Security

The United Workers Movement is encouraging all persons with Immediate Relative status to sign two petitions to be submitted to the U.S. Homeland Security Department.

United Workers Movement acting president Rabby Syed told *Saipan Tribune* that one petition is an appeal to Homeland Security to waive some of the requirements for IRs of U.S. citizens to file for green cards.

Syed said the other petition will be a request to reconsider the status of the IRs of Freely Associated States citizens.

He said they want to ask Homeland Security to waive the application fee for green cards and the 2008 Poverty Guidelines requirement.

"Saipan's economy is very bad. Our wages are very low. It's hard for us to fulfill the requirements. It's also hard for us to find sponsors," said Syed, who is also president of the City Taxi Association.

The federal fee for petitioning an alien relative for green card status reportedly costs $355, while an adjustment to a permanent status application costs $930. With the addition of attorney's fees and other costs, a green card applicant will pay a total of $3,400.

According to the 2008 Poverty Guidelines, a sponsor with two household members must have an annual income of at least $17,500.

At present, the CNMI's minimum wage is $4.05 an hour.

Syed said the petition signing for IRs of U.S. citizens will be at Winchell's in Garapan starting tomorrow, Saturday, to Monday, from 6pm to 8pm.

As for IRs of FAS citizens, the petition to reconsider their situations will be discussed, also at Winchell's at the same days and time, he said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

'Green energy' venture breaks ground at SSHS

The CNMI's first public alternative energy production system to use a combination of both solar and wind energy will be implemented at Saipan Southern High School by February 2009.

The project was proposed to SSHS by the former Concorde Garment Manufacturing Co. as an alternative means of settling fines resulting from previous U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulatory violations.

Recurrent power outages and the public School System's interest in alternative energy motivated the school to accept the proposal.

The equipment to be installed is designed to operate the school's science lab and water pump without relying on the public power supply.

In 2005 Concorde was cited by the U.S. EPA for various violations of hazardous waste violations. Concorde retained Allied Pacific Environmental Consulting to assist in its defense of these citations. Concorde, with the assistance of APEC, was able to reach a settlement of this disputed matter. This settlement with EPA allowed Concorde to choose as a part of the settlement a project that would provide public environmental benefits.

In coordination with APEC, Concorde chose to offer Saipan Southern High School an alternative energy opportunity.

APEC, under contract to Concorde, is currently installing a Skystream 3.7 wind turbine and nine Kyocera 18V solar panels. The system will be capable of powering the school's main science laboratory, water pump as well as other units. Another key aspect of this renewable energy system is its so-called "net metering" capability, which allows it to "run the meter backwards," meaning it can turn back the school's electrical meter to save money and reduce its electrical load on the public utility system.

Energy produced by the wind turbine and solar panels will be recorded and measured by means of the Sky Stream's internal data logging system and also by the Green Meter (a software-based renewable energy data recording system). Electrical energy will be stored in a specially designed battery bank system for use within the science classroom.

Students will acquire and analyze wind and solar data, while teachers integrate the mechanics and electrical components into the Natural Science curriculum, which is currently implemented at SSHS. Not only will the students, and the public, be benefiting from learning modern methods for obtaining alternative energy, the combined alternative units have the ability to save the school around $250 each month in electrical costs.

Allied Pacific Environmental Consulting president Tom Polevich stated: "With this pilot renewable energy project, the CNMI is taking a major step forward into the future of alternative energy use and toward fossil fuel independence. What started out as an environmental negative now will end as an environmental positive. The CNMI, SSHS, Concorde Manufacturing and the U.S. EPA are all winners with this project." Another key player in the conceptual design of this project, SSHS vice principal Craig Garrison, is enthusiastic about the ground breaking at his school yesterday. A ribbon cutting and system activation ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 17, 2009.

APEC and the project team acknowledge and appreciate the assistance provided by CNMI government agencies, including PSS; CUC Power Division; DPW Energy and Building Code Divisions; DEQ; HPO; Zoning and; the Governor's Office. ***(PR)***

Picture shows most of the members of the project team. From left, Thomas Salas, governor's special adviser for renewable energy; David Loan, PSS CIP Coordinator; Robert Jordan, APEC PM; Joe Corella, Spectrum Electric president; Charles Jordan, adviser to APEC and distributor for AltE. Craig Garrison, SSHS vice principal; Steve Pixley, Tan Holdings legal counsel; Peter Leau, SSHS principal; Thelma Inos, DPW Energy Division director. Not in photo are Thomas Polevich, APEC president; Tano Group, construction contractor; Jim Thomas and Brian Clayton of Pacific Wind and Solar, distributors for SouthWest Wind and Power (manufacturers of the Skystream).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OPA needs more auditors

Public Auditor Michael Pai said yesterday his office, which has been understaffed, needs additional auditors.

The Office of the Public Auditor currently has only 18 employees, including eight auditors, four investigators, a legal counsel and investigator assigned to a local task force on government corruption, another legal counsel and three administrative staff.

"We're shorthanded compared to the work that needs to be done," Pai said, adding that funding is available to pay for the salaries of these positions under the proposed budget.

Under the fiscal year 2009 proposed budget now back on the governor's desk, OPA is authorized to have up to 30 full time employees and a budget of over $2.57 million for personnel and operations.

Since the start of fiscal year 2009 on Oct. 1, OPA has received 35 to 40 complaints or requests for audits and investigations, according to Pai. This is on top of the requests and complaints received in prior months.

Moreover, OPA has six to seven ongoing audits, including that of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s procurement.

"We are going to match it [number of additional auditors needed] with the work needed to be done. We don't want to 'overhire'," he added. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS

PSS sets Islandwide Science Fair

The CNMI Public School System will be hosting its 2009 Islandwide Science Fair from Jan. 30 through Feb. 1, 2009. The fair will showcase budding public school scientists from Grades K to 12 who will prepare, present, and defend their projects. Students are invited to submit their projects to their respective science instructors. Each public school may only register five of their school level winning projects.

Projects will be placed in one of four categories: (1) Life Science; (2) Physical Science; (3) Earth and Space Science; and (4) Health/Nutrition/Medical Science. Student participants will compete in five grade cluster groups:

(a) Level 1: Grades K-1
(b) Level 2: Grades 2-3
(c) Level 3: Grades 4-5
(d) Level 4: Grades 6-8
(e) Level 5: Grades 9-12

Outstanding individual science projects will compete at the Guam Science Expo. To compete in the PSS Islandwide Science Fair, each student participant must fill out and fax a copy of the PSS Islandwide Science Fair '09 entry form on or before Jan. 28, 2009, to 664-3941.

The public is invited to an Open House on Jan. 31 beginning at 1:30pm. An awards ceremony will be held on Feb. 1 from 9am to 12pm. The Marianas High School Gymnasium has been chosen as the venue for the fair.

Projects will be judged and rated based on scientific criteria, creative ability, understanding, clarity, creative ability, understanding, clarity, and dramatic value, and technical skill. Projects must also meet guidelines established by the Science Fair Committee. ***(PR)***

Rota waters get green flag

The Division of Environment Quality has analyzed water samples collected from Rota's recreational beaches and storm water drainage this week and none of the samples showed excessive concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria nor did they exceed the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. Therefore, DEA assigns the sampled beach sites a green flag.

DEQ took samples from 12 locations on Rota this week. Marine Water Quality Reports are also provided at www.deq.gov.mp/section.aspx?secID=4 and http://www.cnmicoralreef.net/wq/beachcloseweeklyresults.htm. The public may receive e-mail notifications of the weekly marine water quality reports. To do so, send an email to environment@deq.gov.mp.

For more information, contact DEQ at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

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Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

January 23, 2001

Man gambles life to save tourists

Twenty-six-year old Galileo "Kaily" Torwal would have joined the U.S . Navy in July of this year to pursue his dream. But the young man who was described by his peers as friendly, smart and funny will no longer be able to fulfill his ambition. Kaily died while saving the life of visiting Japanese couple Kohei Mase, 51 and his wife Takako, 50, on Jan. 21. Fellow employees at BSEA, Inc. where Kaily works as a boat attendant are still at a loss on how to accept the tragedy that struck the man who was loved by everyone. It was just one of those parasailing trips with Japanese tourists which Kaily joined for his company at around 2pm. Kaily assured Kohei and Takako that they will enjoy the trip and they have nothing to worry about.

Entry of new Tinian casino nears

TINIAN—The Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission is wrapping up its financial and background investigation of Tokyo-based Kirino Consultants, the Japanese firm which has expressed interest in establishing another casino on the island. TCGCC Executive Director Esther H. Barr said a licensing hearing will also be conducted to determine the suitability of the project. Commission investigators recently went to Japan to gather all the documents needed in the background investigation. Kirino Consultants already paid the $350,000 application and investigation fee to TCGCC last year so that work can begin immediately on the planned investment.

January 23, 2002

Saipan residents celebrate life

Gov. Juan N. Babauta and Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente led more than 200 Saipan residents, teachers, healthcare workers and students in a march along Beach Road to the American Memorial Park to stress the community's position against abortion practices in the Northern Marianas. The rally was also held in conjunction with the official opening of the Crisis Pregnancy Center and Hotline, which was established to provide assistance and hope to women and teenagers who are unprepared for motherhood. The advocates of life-Grace Christian Academy students, parents, religious leaders, government officials, business leaders and others-marched from the American Memorial Park to the DFS Galleria in Garapan and back to the park.

Gaming industry may fuel economic growth

With the impending phase-out of the garment industry in the Commonwealth in 2004, the government should consider the gaming industry on Tinian as an alternate source of revenue that would keep the CNMI's economic engine going. Tinian Sen. Jose Dela Cruz said he suggested this idea to Gov. Juan N. Babauta during a meeting where they discussed the projected shortfall in revenues brought on by the continuing decline in the local economy. "Since the garment industry will be phasing out eventually, I suggested to the Governor that we should look at the gaming industry on Tinian and try to nurture that so that, hopefully, we can realize a good return on that particular industry," the senator said.

January 23, 2004

Tinian to get own screeners

Hiring of federal screeners for Tinian airport may begin in MarchThe West Tinian International Airport is expected to have its own federal screeners soon as the Department of Homeland Security hinted that hiring of Transportation Security Administration airport inspectors may start in March this year. The TSA-Saipan Office disclosed plans to tap the services of a recruitment agency to handle the screening of prospective airport inspectors for Tinian. TSA-Saipan Office director John T. Peoples said a team from the recruitment firm, which handled the applications of all screeners throughout the United States, is scheduled to arrive on Tinian "in the next two months."

Atalig: Latest Compact report in draft form

Commerce Secretary Fermin Atalig clarified yesterday that the figures detailed in the 2003 Impact of the Compact Report submitted to the Governor's Office this week is still a work in progress, although he affirmed the estimated $9.2 million that the CNMI government spent for Micronesian migrants in fiscal year 2002. He said the numbers provided by affected agencies-namely Division of Youth Services, Office of the Public Defender, Public School System, Department of Public Health and Department of Public Safety-on the costs of providing services to citizens of the Freely Associated States could still change. "The report is a draft. The figures could still change.

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25%off

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3 pc. Bathroom Rug Set
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Jefferson Berber
Area Rug 3"x5"
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Home Style Area Rug
24x40
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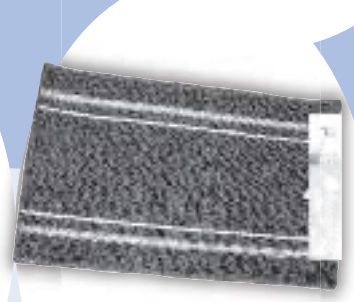

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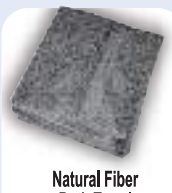
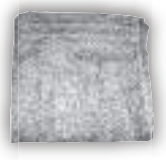


Natural Fiber
Bath Towel
$6.49



Martex Bath Towel
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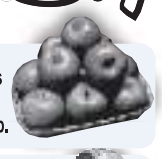

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95¢ lb.

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Gala Apples
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Cabbage
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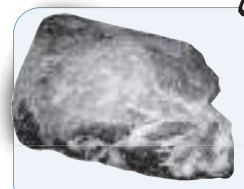
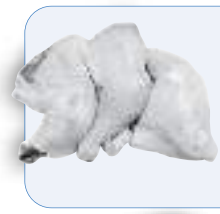
Supermarket



New Zealand
Boneless Beef
Clod
$1.99 /lb.



Chicken Leg
Quarter 22lb./case
$20.99 /cs.

Chicken Whole
Fryers
$1.49 /lb.

Tilapia/Milkfish
$1.49 /lb.

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New Zealand
Mussels 1/2 Shell
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$5.99 /ea.

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Calrose Rice
50lbs.
$34.95 /bg.

CSR Sugar
White Poly
2kg./4.4lbs
$1.79 /ea.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Mr. Obama's summons

The nation and the world were witness to two breath-taking sights Tuesday. There was Barack Obama, on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, becoming the 44th president of the United States and summoning his compatriots to "a new era of responsibility." And there, stretching before him and filling most of the Mall, were his countrymen—as many as one of every 150 Americans, cheering and crying and, in many cases, ready to take up his call.

If Mr. Obama's Inauguration Day is remembered for his sober challenge to Americans to "find meaning in something greater than themselves," it will be remembered, too, for the majestic crowd that soaked up his words—as massive, diverse and optimistic as any throng the capital has ever seen.

Mr. Obama proclaimed that both the nation's problems and its solutions fall not just to him but to the people gathered before him and those they left at home. The economic crisis flowed from "the greed and irresponsibility" of some, he said, but also from "our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age." And while there is much the government "can do and must do," he said, "it is ultimately the faith and determination of the American people upon which this nation relies." He called on every American to recognize "that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world."

The new president insisted that the crises are so grave, and the circumstances so altered, that not only new answers but new questions are needed: It's no longer whether government should be small or big but how to make it work better; not whether free markets are good or bad but how to harness and direct them so that prosperity is more broadly shared; not whether, in protecting the nation, to choose security or American ideals but how to safeguard both.

To the world, Mr. Obama promised American leadership based on "the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint." He told terrorists that "we will defeat you"; warned dictators that "you are on the wrong side of history"; pledged to the world's poor "to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow, to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds."

It was, for Americans, a day of joy, because with their first black president they took a giant step on a long path to overcoming the stain of slavery and discrimination. It was a moment of hope, because Mr. Obama sought to combine a sober acknowledgment of the perils the nation faces—the wars, the recession, the mounting debt and ebbing confidence—with an unflappable assurance that they can be overcome. The nation's challenges "are serious and they are many," he said. "They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America—they will be met."

Recent polls show that Americans agree on both counts: They understand how deep-seated and long-term are the problems, but they also believe Mr. Obama is well equipped to solve them. That confidence, made tangible on the Mall Tuesday at noon, may be the strongest asset the new president has at his disposal as he sets to work Wednesday morning.

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IRS
AUDIT DIVISI
MR. BRILLIG, I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE SOME IMPROPER DEDUCTIONS HERE, AS WELL AS UNPAID PAYROLL TAXES! I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS...
I'M QUALIFIED TO BE TREASURY SECRETARY?
TREVER ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL

Change in the Commonwealth

By ED STEPHENS

Ed is a pilot, economist, and writer. He holds a degree in economics from UCLA and is a former U.S. naval officer. His column runs every Friday. Visit Ed at TropicalEd.com and SaipanBlog.com.

Remember when June 1, 2009, seemed so far away? That's when CNMI immigration matters will grow some real teeth. Well, it ain't far. It's just 129 days down the road.

Don't ask me how the enforcement details will zig or the policy nuances will zag. I'm sort of wondering that myself. Meanwhile, a lot of my friends are twisting in the wind over their immigration status. I've known some alien workers in the CNMI for over 15 years, thus demonstrating that (a) I am really getting old, and (b) I can't really imagine the Commonwealth without this community, simply because I have no other frame of reference.

Maybe that's one of those small and haunting lessons in life: If your surroundings and situation are pleasant, then you get so accustomed to familiar faces and familiar voices that you don't notice them until they're gone. The familiar is concrete. The absence of the familiar is abstract. Given that pleasantness is more rare than it is common (I'm well-traveled enough to state that fact definitively), any random changes are likely to be for the worse, since they invite reversion toward the mean. That's just basic probability at work.

Which is to say that enjoying the familiar, in this context, is rational, not stubborn.

Here's a random example. I shopped at the same *sari-sari* store for years, a very pleasant place, and I was really surprised one afternoon when I saw totally new faces behind the counter. The new people seemed like nice enough folks, but it did make the rhythm of life seem a bit different. I wound up switching to another store. Why? I have no idea. I didn't have a reason to switch. But I didn't have much of a reason not to, either.

Would the new guys take a check without a hassle? No idea.

Would they let me run a tab if I was short on cash? No idea.

Would they take back the occasional item that I'd return, after I discovered at home that it was 35 years past its expiration date? No idea.

Did I have the energy to ask these hypothetical questions to the strangers behind the counter? No.

None of these questions were particularly important, but therein lies the paradox: Since they were too trivial to ask, and therefore too trivial to solve, the old management was worth more to me than the new management, because the old management provided me with a higher level of known utility.

That's a minor episode, so minor nobody normal would notice it, much less analyze it. But the stakes can get a lot higher.

In the big, bold world, when a lawyer leaves a law practice, or a salesman leaves a company, both of them might very well take a lot of their clients and customers with them. This applies even if the professional at issue is not a superstar, or even particularly above average. But their customers have a known level of utility which they attach to the professional, so they're comfortable keeping it.

The very best thing about Saipan isn't the scenery; I've been all over the tropics, and there are a lot of beautiful places. It's the people that really make any place what it is. Well, on that note, I guess that big changes are just around the corner. The familiar routines of island life might be changing forever. Some people wanted this. Some didn't. But, either way, it's no longer abstract. It's very close indeed.

■■■

The tech world is so full of nasties this week that they deserve special mention.

1. The Conficker computer worm is an "epidemic" said to be the biggest such infection in six years. It's a bit of a mystery; the worm has yet to really do anything except spread, and nobody seems to know what this thing will do when it's triggered.

2. According to John C. Dvorak's podcast of Jan. 21, some models of Seagate hard drives may be experiencing a 30 percent failure rate. Coincidentally, my one and only Seagate drive (merely months old) died two days ago and I lost all the data on it. I'm not bothering to research the issue, but some of you might want to know about it.

3. According to several large newspapers, a hacker may have compromised credit card data Heartland Payment Systems, which reportedly processes over 100 million credit card transactions (wow!) per month, maybe including yours.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

What would Martin say?

By JOSEPH MARTIN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left to right: MarshaRose Joyner, Dylan Cabrera (3rd grade, KagES), Joseph Martin (10th grade, MHS), Frances Rosemarie G. Santos (3rd grade, KagES), Jimaela V. Ham (runner up, 8th Grade, Grace Christian), Yvonnalynn Salalila (8th Grade, Hopwood Jr. High), Heather Linday (teacher, Grace Christian), Bianca Blanco (elocution winner; 11th Grade, Grace Christian), Dayanara Flores (elocution winner; 8th Grade, Hopwood Jr. High). Runners up not present: Anastasia Schweiger (Grace Christian), Jerome Ocampo (11th Grade, MHS), Richard Cruz (12th Grade, MHS).

Editor's Note: Joseph Martin, at 10th Grade student at Marianas High School*, was the winner in the "What Would Martin Say?" 2009 Essay and Elocution Contest (9th-12th Grade division) sponsored by the African American Cultural Preservation Committee on Saipan, as part of the 3rd annual commemoration of MLK Day here in the CNMI. During a ceremony on Monday, Jan. 19, at the American Memorial Park, he received a check for $100 from the AACPC (through support from the Northern Marianas Council for the Humanities' National Endowment for the Humanities), plus a free Megazone pass courtesy of Megabyte, plus a free movie pass from Hollywood Theaters. (Additional prizes to contest winners and runners up in other divisions were donated by IT&E, formerly PTI). Here is Joseph's winning essay for all to enjoy:*

As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step." And certainly, president-elect Barack Obama's victory represents that "first step"—a step that will call for a change toward unity in the United States of America.

If Martin Luther King Jr. were still alive today, that "step" would bring forth a mixture of emotions. If given a chance, one could imagine this is what he would have said:

"I stand before you today, proud and joyful because of an event that will go down in history as one of the greatest and most significant. I hoped and waited for this day; a day many thought would never come. But for my people and me, this day had always been in our hearts for generations.

"Even through the darkest and hardest times, we held on to our dreams of freedom and unity. Through all the suffering and heartache, we hoped for this day.

"This will forever be an unforgettable day—the day I learned that Barack Obama, a brother dedicated to justice, peace, love and brotherhood was to become the 44th president of our wonderful nations. Through him, and with him, now is our time to make real the promise of democracy. Now is the time to remember the strength of America. Now is the time for our people—all people—to come forward and prevail. Now is the time for all of God's people—black, white, Jew, Gentile, Protestant and Catholic—to hold hands in unity and brotherhood and once again believe that America is a place where all things are possible.

"Still, I am not unmindful that, even today, racial discrimination continues to exist. The war has not yet been won. The task has not yet been done. But, indeed, Barack Obama's presidency represents a monumental leap forward. It is a leap that will soon clear the clouds of racial prejudice. In some not-too-distant tomorrow, the sun will shine again.

"My dreams still live....that my children and my grandchildren would one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character; that this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'

"Now, I see that dream has been kept alive by Barack Obama, and most especially by ALL Americans who went to the polls that day.

"Yes, I had a dream once, and with this victory, that dream is closer to fulfillment! I am confident that soon will be a time of great opportunities. Ahead will be a brighter future!

"Thank you, America! Thank you, President Obama! Thank God Almighty! Thank God Almighty!"

Letters to the Editor

A done deal

I am not surprised to learn that President Bush approved the marine monument. I've always suspected from the beginning that the monument is not for conservation, but for homeland security, military use and the enhancement of President Bush's image. I especially do not believe the statements of Council of Environmental Quality chair James Connaughton and President Bush that the native islanders' (Chamorro and Refalawash) concerns will be protected. The marine monument was a done deal from the beginning. Pew was only used, for over two years, to pave a pathway for President Bush to approve the marine monument. Chairman Connaughton and his group knew of Pew's propaganda, but were never present to lend a helping hand, not until just a few months ago. It's a very well executed plan!

I also do not believe Pew and their proponents when they profess that designation of the monument is in the best interest of the native islanders, and that we shouldn't let it pass us by. "A win-win situation, job opportunities, we will be known all over the world, become rich and famous," etc, etc... I've heard these types of remarks from "salesmen" too many times before! I also know that it has misled lots of people, including our leaders, both local and federal.

I am equally disappointed by our elected leader's lack of a strong united stand in protecting what is rightfully ours. A third of our ancestral land and ocean represents a big chunk that has been taken away from our already small islands. Perhaps we have forgotten the teachings of our ancestors that the land, ocean, and our people will always be our most precious natural resources. Our islands are but a grain of sand in the middle of the ocean, and our resources are different from those of the continental United States and other big countries. The exploitation of natural gas, oil, minerals, diamonds, gold, etc., are contrary to the teachings of our ancestors and these activities contribute a lot to global warming. They even kill and destroy each other for such things!

Is it true that the federal government will return our submerged lands should we agree to the marine monument? Returning something that is ours in exchange for something that is also ours? Did our elected leaders fall for this, or is it the same old federal government's pathetic attitude where they made themselves believe that one size shoe fits the whole world? It seems to me like, *"in search of weapons of mass destruction."*

The 1906 Antiquities Act that President Bush utilized should be stricken from the book. It's an outdated and very inhumane Act. I still can't bring myself to believe that, with a stroke of the President's pen, an area will become a monument without consultation or due regard to the people there, especially to those that will be affected the most. Needless to say, human rights, be it native islanders, American Indians, or others, must be respected.

The manner in which the marine monument proposal was presented to us has been especially insulting for me, to our traditional leaders, and was very disrespectful to the Association of Pacific Island Legislature, Micronesian Chief Executive Summit, Guam Fisherman's Co-op, 29th Guam Legislature, Rep. Madeline Bordallo, and others that stood firm with us in our belief in protecting what is rightfully ours. I do not believe that the Native Islanders are so arrogant not to share whatever small resources they may have. I believe that all we wanted to say was which resource should be shared and how much.

Our relation with the United States under the Covenant is that we're neither a state, union, territory, but we are in a "political union" with the United States. Does the 1906 Antiquities Act apply to us under this relationship since we are not a territory of the United States?

I guess whatever questions we may ask, our plans for our islands will no longer be valid since they're in the hands of the federal government. Perhaps the new administration will listen to our concerns.

Lino M. Olopai
Chalan Kanoa, Saipan

What did self-governance leave us with?

Section 903 of the our Covenant agreement assures us that nothing in the Covenant, in particular Article IX dealing with consultation, is deemed to prevent the presentation of cases arising under the Covenant agreement to the federal courts. Sections 903 expresses the clear intent of the United States and the Northern Marianas that such cases can be heard in court, and that the undertakings or promises by the Government of the United States and by the Government of the Northern Marianas provided for in the Covenant will be enforceable. This is a basic protection that guarantees to both sides that the enforcement powers of the Federal courts can be brought to bear with respect to the promises made in the Covenant.

Now the Fitial administration is within its bounds to file a lawsuit on the matter but is it supported by the will of the people? Can this governor, along with former Speaker Oscar Rasa, offer proof beyond reasonable doubt that our right to self-governance under their control for many years had led us into prosperity or poverty? Is it really about self-governance that this administration is seeking to clarify or is it the fear that all the years of corruption are finally coming to a screeching halt. For over two decades, this administration and Rasa had known about the threats of a federal takeover, but none of them lifted a finger to correct or rectify our internal loopholes and flaws in our immigration and labor control. Such ignorance and self-interest has led all of us to the predicament we face today.

For over two decades, the federal government's DOI/OIA, including members of Congress, have been in consultations with our government, to include hearings held in the U.S. Congress dating as far back as former governor Froilan Tenorio's tenure. The amount of data, reports, complaints, and other documentations compiled concerning the years of loopholes and flaws in our immigration and labor system is something to consider in this lawsuit.

All this lawsuit is asking for is to instill further mayhem and disrespect to our own indigenous local U.S. citizens and residents of the Commonwealth who have been victimized in terms of being the last priority for jobs, an unrealistic self-serving minimum wage that appeased the rich, while the poor remained poor.

So, we say go ahead Governor Fitial and former Speaker Mr. Oscar Rasa, bring more shame and disrespect to our suffering people, the indigenous local taotao tanos whom you all left behind and forgotten for many years.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼78°	▲87° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°	▲86° ▼78°

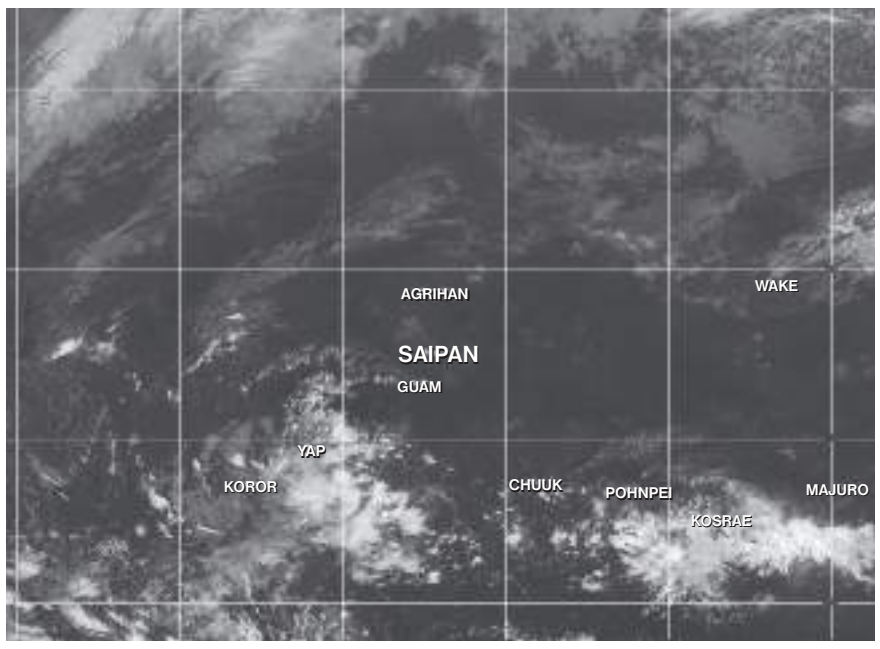
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Sunny	▲84	▼75
Palau	Rain	▲85	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼76
Chuuk	Showers	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲84	▼77
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼77
Majuro	Rain	▲83	▼78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲73	▼64
Beijing	Sunny	▲14	▼ 7
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲64	▼48
Honolulu	Showers	▲78	▼68
London	Showers	▲45	▼34
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲66	▼52
Manila	Showers	▲88	▼72
Melbourne	Sunny	▲84	▼62
Miami	Sunny	▲73	▼59
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲45	▼34
Osaka	Showers	▲42	▼22
Paris	Showers	▲51	▼34
Pusan	Flurries	▲35	▼17
Rome	Showers	▲50	▼49
Salem	Cloudy	▲49	▼34
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲58	▼48
Seoul	Flurries	▲18	▼ 7
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲54	▼29
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲51	▼34

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, THURSDAY, JAN. 22, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough extends southward from 18N142E to EQ142E. Converging winds near the trough axis are generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over Yap and near Koror bounded by a line from 11N139E to 4N144E to 2N141E to 6N137E back to 11N139E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Pohnpei between 5N and 2N from 156E to 160E as well as east of Kosrae within 80 miles of a line from 4N164 to 4N171E. A cold front enters the discussion area at 25N174E and extends southwestward to stationary front at 19N157E. Scattered showers are found within 70 miles of the cold front from 25N174E to 21N170E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
7:34 AM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
12:18 PM Today	Low Tide:	1.4 Feet
4:52 PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Saturday	6:47 AM	6:11 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:12 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:13 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:14 AM	3:33 PM
Saturday	5:03 AM	4:25 PM
Sunday	5:50 AM	5:17 PM
Monday	6:33 AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	7:13 AM	6:59 PM

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  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
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  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Guam-Narita			
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Guam-Osaka			
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily
Guam-Nagoya			
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Incheon			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Palau			
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5
Palau-Manila			
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7
Narita-Manila			
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Letters to the Editor

Pepto Bismol, please!

The bloated CNMI government is in serious need of Pepto Bismol due to its high spending on unnecessary costs. Why should we even consider austerity Fridays part 2 and risk our retirement fund when there are many other options? Some CNMI lawmakers keep pushing for the same old ineffective solutions to cutting costs. Creativity is what is lacking with some lawmakers. Government workers would not have to suffer if austerity Fridays does not have a sequel. Instead, we should concentrate on the following simple yet effective cost-cutting measures:

Reducing the Senate and House of Representatives. Have only two senators per island and one representative per precinct. Better yet, abolish either the House of Representatives or the Senate to have a unicameral legislature like Guam and other parts of the U.S. Check-and-balance is always the typical career politician's excuse to this solution. Where are the so-called checks and balances? Our economy would not be in this shape if we had a true check-and-balance system. Laws would get passed faster and we would not need austerity Fridays again because of the drastic cost savings.

Abolishing municipal councils. We don't need more lawmakers.

Reducing the monthly allowance that Rota and Tinian senators receive. They receive a $5,000 allowance each month because they work on Saipan. Let's calculate the rent and flights. About $800 per month for a decent house and $800 max for travel back and forth on weekends mean $1,600 a month is all they need. ($5,000 x 12=$60,000) We currently spend *$360,000 a year* for their allowance when we should only be spending *$115,200 per year* maximum. Do not forget that they each get $39,000 per year on top of that.

Reducing the salaries of judges and agency directors. The minimum wage in the NMI is $4.05 per hour. Judges make around $130,000 per year. Reduce their salaries to $80,000 per year or reduce the number of judges we currently have. I bet at $80,000, they'll stay. They are replaceable anyway. Most of them are just former lawyers. Many government agency directors make $60,000-$70,000 per year. I believe CUC recently hired a deputy director for $180,000 per year. HOLY $#!+. The Senate is now trying to increase resident director salaries from $39,000 to $45,000. They need to practice what they preach when it comes to cost-cutting. They first should reduce the salaries of agency directors on Saipan before increasing Tinian and Rota directors. Saipan, Rota, and Tinian directors should all get the same salary range. They should not make any exceptions when it comes to salaries. The exemptions that they keep creating should be considered pay discrimination.

When the government posts announcements in newspapers, it should only be in English. They are spending on bigger advertisement space to include Chamorro and Carolinian language when everyone can read English because of our educational system. If you can read in Chamorro or Carolinian, you can read English. The bigger the ad, the higher the price.

Remember those who create ineffective legislations and those who barely create any legislation. Don't re-elect them. Vote wisely. *Basta ma bota si primu yan si prima. Bota si malati yan gasgas. Biba Marianas! Fanoge Chamorro para I tanota!*

Jesse Torres
Kagman, Saipan

Survival in the new world

Allow me to tell my story to the people of the CNMI, especially the CNMI Medical Referral Office and the elected officials up on the Hill. My story might sound foolish to some but anybody who loves the truth will listen.

Before I start with my story, let me introduce myself. My name is Nicolas Pangelinan Blas, a CNMI full blooded indigenous. I am the same as any Refaluwasch and Chamorro people working to bring food to the table.

Now let me begin the story: On Dec. 2, 2008, I was sent to Manila to escort my *kuya* (brother) who would undergo a kidney operation at the Asian Hospital in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, in the Philippines.

When we arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, we were picked up and dropped off at the Asian Hospital. My *kuya* was admitted for two days, and then released. He was given medication for his kidney operation, and we were transferred to the Civic Place, just across the Asian Hospital. A week later, he was admitted again at the hospital.

Two days after that, I received a note from the housekeeping staff where my *kuya* and I stayed. The note says, "Please call Nita on this telephone numbers." I called the phone number to talk to Nita. I asked Nita, if she needed me.

"Mr. Blas, you need to move out of that room where you're staying," she said.

I asked, "Where should I stay if I move out of the room?"

She said, "Sir, you have to go and stay at the hospital."

Then I told her, "Look, listen, and understand. The hospital is a place for sick people, and not for a healthy man like myself. The hospital has no room for my things and me. My privacy will be invaded and my rights will be taken away, and that is not what I am looking forward to."

"Sir, but this is the policy," she said.

I asked her whose policy that is.

"Saipan's," she said.

I asked her to call Saipan right there, and tell that person who made that policy to change it and stop playing games with people's life because I am not a toy here. Then I hung up the phone and waited if I should be forced out of that room.

After I hung up the phone, I knelt down and prayed, "Father, please do give protection and assistance to this poor soul of mine, and in time of my distress, Oh God! It appeared that I was sent to this place, picked up at the airport and dumped here in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, looking for my own survival in this world, without anybody to assist or guide me and my *kuya* in this land." Then I ended my prayers.

On Dec. 25, 2008, here came this generous and caring warrior, a Vietnam War hero, a retired Marine, a full blooded CNMI indigenous living in San Pedro, Philippines for eight years now. His name is Franklin Cing.

This man told me that at one time, Mrs. Evelyn David (sorry to mention her name; she's from the CNMI) asked Mr. Franklin Cing to help a patient. The patient was operated on and released from the Asian Hospital, but there's no room for him to stay and food to eat. What a painful situation for that patient. He also mentioned about a person who was referred to Manila from the CNMI, and that person was not picked up at the airport because his name was not on the list. Another painful situation for that person. He also mentioned a woman, also from the CNMI, who was robbed by purse snatchers and her money was taken away. Another sad and painful situation for that woman; there's no escort with her.

It seemed that this young man, Franklin Cing, from the CNMI, loves and cares for the Chamorros who are sent to Asian Hospital. So often he visits his people; sometimes he brings something for them to eat. He loves his people and he knows our culture and traditions. He wants to be closer to them and serve his people here in a professional and right way, but this man can't do all these things to satisfy his people with his own wealth. Also, this man said he knows the annual funding for the Philippine referrals but only if the CNMI Referral Office should give him the opportunity to take control of that funding will he be able to provide transportation and manpower to escort all CNMI patients referred to the Asian Hospital.

On Jan. 2, 2009, I received an e-mail from a fellow Chamorro who I met when I was there. This woman is young, healthy, highly educated, and is very respectful to the elderly. I consider and embrace her like a family member. This young and blameless woman (her name is Carmen) told me in the e-mail, "The referral staff in the Philippines didn't deliver her subsistence allowance on Jan. 1, 2009, because the bank was closed, and she will have no food to eat." Another painful situation for an innocent and blameless CNMI indigenous individual. This thing could have been prevented if staff from the Philippine referral prepared the money earlier. They knew that the bank would be closed on that day but neglected to deliver the bread at the proper time.

I would recommend that Mr. Franklin Cing be recognized and be given the opportunity to take control of the Philippine referral funding so there'd be a change, and that the CNMI people who will be referred to the Asian Hospital will not experience the same painful situation just because nobody was there to assist and guide them.

Thank you all for taking your time to read my story. Any elected official who wants change? Now is the time to act for change!

Nicolas Pangelinan Blas
via e-mail

ENROLL IN NMTI COURSES NOW!

Enrollment in the Northern Marianas Trades Institute is now open for these continuing courses: Core Curriculum, Carpentry, Plumbing, Painting, Electrical.

New Courses starting February: Auto Repair & Small Engine Repair

Come join us and learn a new skill or improve it.

Call Vic, Rose, or Tony at 235-6684!!!

LEARN A SKILL FOR A LIFETIME!!!

SPONSOR A STUDENT FROM THE NMTI

Local students attending the Northern Marianas Trades Institute are in need of funding to complete their trades skills. They are seeking a sponsor who will help them complete their studies.

The program works like this. You or your company adopts a student or several from our roster. We will introduce him to you. As his sponsor, he will report to you on his progress periodically.

If you know of someone that you wish to sponsor that is currently not in the school that will be acceptable also.

These students are learning skills for a lifetime. Come in and let's discuss how you can help. Also see our facilities and watch students in action. A miraculous change is taking place in them.

Call Vic, Rose or Tony at 235-6684 for more details.

Please help!
The future of Saipan in their hands and in yours!
Sponsor a student to learn a skill for a lifetime!!!

We have overcome!

In the '60s, civil rights activists sang, in unison, *We Shall Overcome*. Beginning on Jan. 20 of this year, this once hopeful cry for justice has changed to "We Have Overcome". Indeed, on the steps of the Capitol stood a man whose story "reflects the enduring promise of our country" after 233 years. He's a powerful and persuasive communicator in extraordinary times of economic and foreign crisis, instilling hope in the multitude that, with collective resolve we can rebuild a brighter tomorrow for our country and posterity.

In this connection, I say with unequivocal pride "Hail to the Chief" for encouraging fellow countrymen to morph from fear to hope. Hail to the Chief for slamming the brakes on a highly destructive and defective U.S. Public Law 110-229. Thank you Mr. President for your vision to ensure that policies depict the true sentiments of our people. My personal gratitude for the hopeful opportunity you've given us in participatory democracy and inclusionary assimilation in the formulation of policies emanating from Washington. Yes, we will sail the across the Pacific in search of equal representation for we deserve nothing less.

Finally, while most fellow Americans now celebrate "We Have Overcome", ours has just begun right back at square one: We Shall Overcome! We deserve equal representation over the indignities we have had to endure willed to us by the arrogance of the "we few". Help us get there too, Mr. President. *Si Yuus Maase`!*

John S. DelRosario Jr.
As Gonno, Saipan

Condolences

This is to send my sincere condolences to the Maglona family of Tinian, on the loss of your patriarch, Ben. I am in shock, as it saddens me again to be writing another letter of this sort in such a short time, to the same family, after losing Julian and now Ben.

Also, Linda, (Hawaii) sends her sincere sympathy in your time of loss.

Ben was a good man who always extended a helping hand to people no matter from where they where from.

Our prayers are with you all, God speed Ben, and may you rest in peace.

John Mixson
via e-mail

SAN VICENTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
P.O. Box 501370
Saipan MP 96950, USA
(670) 237 3791

January 21, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
The United States of America

Dear President Barack Obama:

We are students of the San Vicente Elementary School of the Public School System of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. Now, isn't that a mouthful? We wanted to catch your attention, since you are just starting your new job and pretty soon, the whole world will be in your In-basket. So we want to be at the head of the line.

To the point: you and your family are hereby cordially, officially and enthusiastically invited to come visit our island. You can come to our school for lunch. Miss Miller, our Vice Principal, will make sure you get a nutritious plate at our new cafetoreum; Ms. Salas, our Principal, will walk you through our hallways. She'll show you our new Kindergarten room, which we are very proud of since we are one of the few schools on island that has a kindergarten program. She'll probably tell you that we need another one and that happily the Legislature has identified and allocated funds for that purpose. You think if our PSS can get that built soon, you'll find some program funds for all the schools? Deal?

We'll give Ma'am Michelle a class period to teach us anything she wants, and we will teach Malia Ann and Natasha how to giggle the island way! And you can sit with our Social Studies teachers to make sure they got it right on government and democracy.

We are "Where America's Day Begins." Our cousins in Guam south of us coined the phrase but we think we are slightly further east longitudinally than they are so we have since joined them in that claim. So far, federal officials have only stopped over Guam on their way somewhere. It would be a great demonstration of your pledge to be President to all of us—Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the CNMI—if sometime, you can physically and officially visit any of us. Of course, we would be honored if you keep us on top of your list.

Mr. President, we are tired of getting our mail sent to Spain, or Mauritius (because of the MP in our address), or Taiwan since it rhymes with Saipan, or, unable to trade in the Internet because there is no designation for us in the USA category unless we log in on the foreign country column, so your visit could get us into the global map in a hurry.

We just sent Representive Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan to the U.S. Congress, our first since we started electing an official Rep to the august body last November. We will send him a copy of this letter so he can help your Air Force One pilot locate us in the Western Pacific.

Oh, one of our former schoolmates and our current district legislator, Tina Sablan, attended your inauguration festivities. Like you, she has pushed for transparency and openness in government, so you might exchange notes in that department. (One of our teachers wrote in one of our local papers that she would do well to run for the presidential office in 2016.) Your example has been an inspiration for us to focus on our possibilities even as we remain clear and keep an eye on our limits. And in your and our new America, you have shown that the sky is the limit!

OK, this letter has gotten to be too long, but we are serious. MarshaRose Joyner, a long-time civil rights activist from Hawaii was at our school today as part of our Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemorative celebration (we also thought she was your mother since she came from Hawaii where you lived when you were young) and she has great faith that coming over would be something you would seriously consider. So, will you come visit us?

We, too, are your new Americans!

Respectfully yours,

Vanessa Gramlich (5th Grade)
William Davis (1st Grade)
Co-Presidents, The SVES Student Council

P.S. The names and signatures of our school family follow.

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BIRTHDAY SHOUT-OUT

Belated birthday greetings go out to Bonnie S. Cruz, standing second from right, who celebrated her birthday yesterday, Jan. 22, 2009. Wishing you the very best birthday from your loving family "Team Ericco." From left to right, seated, Chris Peralta, Eric Cruz, and Jack Cepeda. From left, standing, Chris Alepuyo, Carla Peralta, Hercia Alepuyo, Eleanor Cepeda, Melvin Cepeda, the birthday celebrant Bonnie S. Cruz and Mike Cruz.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FIRST BIRTHDAY

Happy first birthday and christening to Santino Joshua Camacho Limes. Greeting from Daddy, Mommy, and the rest of the family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NATJA chooses NMI as contest prize destination

The Northern Mariana Island of Rota recently welcomed travel journalist Bryan Scofield as part of the annual North American Travel Journalists Association Awards Competition. For his first place Best Travel Broadcast entry in the 2007 NATJA contest, Scofield was awarded a package tour to the tropical island of Rota and the neighboring island of Guam earlier this month.

Schofield and travel companion Jenny Broughton were on Rota on Jan.10-12, 2009, where they lodged at Rota Resort and Country Club. Their first day on island included a trail trek through the resort farmland property leading to the famous and picturesque Swimming Hole site, before returning to enjoy the warm sunshine and northern breeze while relaxing poolside at the resort.

Day 2 featured a south island tour of the Cave Museum, Tweksberry Beach Park, Aqua Gift Shop, Honey Garden, Japanese era relics, including the Sugar Mill Train and World War II cannon overlooking Sasanhaya Bay, and a panaromic view of Rota's legendary Wedding Cake Mountain. The couple spent a leisurely afternoon at Teteto Beach, followed by a sunset barbeque overlooking the ocean.

"Rota has maintained a balance between modern conveniences and deep island history...truly the most relaxation I've had in years," said Schofield, following his visit.

True to its moniker as "the friendly island," Rota also made an impression on Broughton.

"The resort was spectacular, and we met many kind locals. When the people are this welcoming, you never want to leave," said Broughton.

The couple also received a personal *hafa adai* ("hello" in indigenous Chamorro) welcome from Rota board representative Edward U. Maratita of the Marianas Visitors Authority. Before their departure on the final day, they took a jungle tour of the island's lush north side jungles.

"We're honored that NATJA would choose the Mariana Islands as a destination prize for our nation's top travel journalists," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We're please that we could collaborate with our partners at the Guam Visitors Bureau to showcase the appeal of our islands as a travel destination."

NATJA is professional association of writers, photographers, editors, and tourism professionals founded in 1991 as a non-political organization. NATJA's mission is "to support the professional development of its members, provide exceptional benefits and valuable resources, support high quality professional journalism, promote travel and leisure activities to the public, and honor the excellence of journalism throughout the world." To join NATJA, applicants must prove only that they are legitimate working travel journalists but do not need "sponsorship" from incumbent members. ***(MVA)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

North American Travel Journalists Association competition winner Bryan Schofield and travel companion Jenny Broughten, left, are welcomed to the island of Rota by Marianas Visitors Authority board representative Edward Maratita and staffer Sandra Atalig during the couple's visit to island on Jan. 10-12, 2009.

Guam Guard to promote 1st female sergeant major

The Guam Army National Guard will promote First Sergeant Irene M. Fejeran to the rank of Sergeant Major, the highest enlisted rank in the U.S. Army. Fejeran will be the first female in the Guam Army National Guard to attain the rank. She will be promoted in a ceremony to be held at Ypao Beach Park on today, Jan. 23, 2009, at noon.

Fejeran will be the first female promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major in the Guam Army National Guard, an organization that began on Liberation Day, July 21, 1981.

Fejeran, a 29-year career soldier, joined the Guam Army National Guard in December 1983, after being honorably discharged from the active duty Army. She is the mother of three grown children and grandmother of five. She currently resides in the village of Dededo. ***(PR)***

Guam's Bordallo joins Military Personnel, Readiness subpanels

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The House Armed Services Committee recently met to formally organize, choose subcommittee assignments, ratify committee rules, and finalize its oversight plans for the 111th Congress.

Guam Rep. Madeleine Z. Bordallo was selected to serve on the Military Personnel Subcommittee and was also reappointed to serve on the Readiness Subcommittee.

As a member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, Bordallo will oversee policy regarding military personnel, reserve integration and employment, military health care, military education, POW and MIA issues, as well as Morale, Welfare, and Recreation policy and programming. Her position on the Readiness Subcommittee will allow for continued oversight of the military buildup in Guam, National Guard and Reserve equipment readiness issues as well as the Department of Defense's environmental programs.

"I look forward to working on the Readiness Subcommittee and Military Personnel Subcommittee to promote policies that improve the readiness and quality-of-life for our men and women in uniform," Bordallo said. "My work on the Readiness Subcommittee is important to ensuring the success of the military buildup in Guam. The Readiness Subcommittee under chairman Ortiz's leadership recognizes the importance of continued oversight of the buildup to ensure the best outcomes for our island. The Personnel Subcommittee has oversight of pay, health care and force structure issues. I want to ensure that our servicemembers and retirees are provided with the quality of health care that is commensurate with their service to our nation. I also want to ensure that our National Guard and Reserves are postured to meet all their missions." ***(PR)***

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Search on for CNMI's longest married couple

The CNMI Chapter of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Community is joining other Marriage Encounter groups around the United States in searching for the longest married couple in the CNMI.

The Couple Married Longest search is being conducted in preparation for the celebration of World Marriage Day on Feb. 7 from 4pm to 6pm at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter established World Marriage Day to honor the husband and wife as head of the family, the basic unit of society. It salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice, and joy in daily, married life.

The celebration is free and open to all married couples.

If you have been married for over 50 years, or if you know of friends or relatives who have been, and both spouses are still living, please e-mail their names, phone numbers, and wedding date to Kanae Quinn at cnmiwmd@yahoo.com.

The deadline for all entries is Jan. 31. The winning couple will be notified and honored at the celebration. ***(PR)***

NEW NURSES

Emmanuel College, the first private postsecondary nursing institution in the region, remains committed to the development of the Commonwealth's healthcare industry. Envisioned by businesswoman and healthcare executive Sedy Demesa as a conduit to the islands' economic development initiative, Emmanuel College graduated 20 students last November. Fifteen students now comprise the second batch, both locals and foreign nationals. Seen in this photo on Jan. 21, the second batch commenced their nine-week clinical program at the Commonwealth Health Center. The clinical program is part of the college's 11-month vocational nursing program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

crime of The Week

Counterfeit money

Crime Stoppers is seeking the community's assistance for information on any person(s) involved in producing counterfeit currency or using counterfeit money as a mode of payment. The Department of Public Safety has recently received a string of complaints from vendors and businesses regarding counterfeit money, which range from small denominations of $5 to larger bills, such as $50 or $100. Anyone reporting the person(s) involved in this type of crime is asked to provide Crime Stoppers with a name, physical description of the suspect, vehicle (if used), and place of residence. Anyone having information about these crimes, please call the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

Youth Congress passes bill mandating removal of dead animals from roads

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Members of the 11th CNMI Youth Congress passed a bill during their second regular session last Jan. 17 mandating the Department of Public Safety to remove dead animals from the streets.

Vice Speaker Adeleyah C. Mojica authored YC Bill No. 11-01, the only bill so far that had been introduced.

The bill also stated that DPS must contact the Health and Sanitation Division of the Department of Public Health for the proper disposal of the dead animals.

In introducing the bill, Mojica explained that there are frequent occurrences of dead animals being found and left on public highways and roads, raising traffic safety issues as cars often swerve because of the carcass lying in the middle of the highway.

Mojica said such a scene is also unsanitary and inhumane.

She said it is also necessary to keep the roads and the island clean and environmentally healthy for citizens and visitors.

Mojica, however, is aware of the dangers posed by requiring the DPS for this responsibility.

She said this also poses a health threat to the police officers and other passengers as their vehicles are not manufactured for such purposes nor are the officers provided proper equipment for the removal and disposal of the dead animals.

She said Health and Sanitation is better equipped with performing this task.

On the same day, the Youth Congress also adopted 13 resolutions, including a request for the DPS, the Office of Adult Probation, and the CNMI Board of Parole for stricter enforcement and monitoring of Registered Sexually Violent Predators.

Speaker Alana May Leon Guerrero introduced YCR No. 11-4 as she stressed that it is their goal to protect the citizens, especially the youth.

She said crimes against minors are serious offenses and should never be tolerated thus strict enforcement and monitoring needs serious implementation.

Another resolution that had been adopted that concerns the community was introduced by Sen. Meagan T. Norita.

YCR No. 11-7 requests the House of Representatives to appropriate funds for the repair and maintenance of the beachside pavilions and the site beautification in the northern precincts.

Norita explained that there are a number of excellent beaches in the northern part of the island that are pristine tourist spots.

She said these should be kept clean and maintained in order to entice more visitors and ensure their return to such sites.

Believing that it should be everyone's duty to look at every aspect and opportunity to assist the ailing economy, she said the aesthetics of these areas have been depleting due to the lack of proper maintenance and funding.

She said some of these pavilions are in dire need of repairs and painting works or renovation, which may lead to hazardous effects.

DPS auto insurance checkpoint tomorrow

The Department of Public Safety Traffic Section will be conducting mandatory liability auto insurance (Public Law 11-55) checkpoints tomorrow, Jan. 24.

The first checkpoint will be on Beach Road Susupe by Minatchom Atdao. This operation will commence at 9am and will terminate at 10:15am.

The second checkpoint will be on Beach Road Garapan by Bank Pacific. This operation will commence at 4pm and will terminate at 5:15pm.

Each checkpoint conducted will last at least 75 minutes at each location. This activity is part of DPS' efforts to ensure that all vehicles on the highway have the mandatory liability auto insurance.

In addition, traffic officers will be conducting highway criminal interdictions, saturation patrols, aggressive driver interdictions, and laser activities.

For more information, contact Sgt. Paul Ogumoro or Police Officer Glenn Rabago at 664-9084/5/6. ***(DPS)***

Commonwealth 0f the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW09-IFB-006

CONSTRUCTION OF PAVILIONS AT CHALAN KANOA BEACH PARK, SAIPAN

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the Construction of Pavilions at Chalan Kanoa Beach Park, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after January 23, 2009 at DPW Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor-Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan. A non-refundable payment to one Hundred Dollars **(US$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division. All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001. Bidding procuredures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Preference is available to US Citizens or Permanent Residents as per Public Law 15-95 and as further Amended by Public Law 15-118 and must be submitted with the BID or PROPOSAL if preference is claimed.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on February 10, 2009, 1:00 p.m. local time at the project site located at Chalan Kanoa Beach Park behind Townhouse, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on February 13, 2009 to **Mr. Joseph M. Inos Jr., Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd floor-Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW09-IFB-006"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 1:00 p.m. local time February 18, 2009. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 1:00 p.m. local time February 18, 2009. and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than February 18, 2009, and must be received no later than February 27, 2009. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 1:00 p.m. local time, March 04, 2009. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 1:00 p.m. local time, on February 23, 2009.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security may be Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certificate (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. The surety company providing the Performance and payment bonds must authorized to conduct business in CNMI and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of each bond.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Twenty **(120)** calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed at one hundred dollars **(US$100.00)** per working days for delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ DIEGO B. SONGSONG
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, Procurement & Supply

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Puengin Inetnon Friday next week

Puengin Inetnon will begin on Jan. 30, 2009, at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. Puengin Inetnon is Kagman's Friday Night Market that will take place every government payday. It will begin at 4pm and end at 10pm. There will vendors selling food, drinks, snacks, clothing, and crafts. Puengin Inetnon is a family oriented event. Alcohol will be prohibited from the event. All are welcome. ***(PR)***

Friends of the Arts audition call

Auditions for "My Fair Lady" the musical stage production and the final FOA production of the current year will be held on Thursday, Jan. 29, 2009, from 6pm to 8pm and Saturday, Jan. 31, 2009, from 3pm to 5pm at Marianas High School, Room 101-D.

This is a large cast production and singers and actors from teen years to mature adults are needed. Principle roles as well as group/chorus scenes are a big part of this musical. Backstage help is also needed, so even if you don't sing or act, you can still be a part of this production. Auditions for acting roles will be held on the above dates if time allows. Showtime for the play will be in late April. Rehearsals will be held evenings and weekends. Those auditioning should be prepared to sing a selection of their own choosing or one of the production numbers. Anyone interested in being a part of the production, but unable to attend either of the auditions dates, call Susan Fishman-Tudor at 233-2225, leave a message with a contact number. ***(PR)***

Attention to families with disabilities on Rota

The Family Hope Center under the CNMI Council for Developmental Disabilities and Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. would like to inform the community that the system navigators trip to Rota has been rescheduled from Jan. 22 and 23, to Jan. 27 and 28, 2009, to conduct interviews and follow up(s) for families with disabilities.

We encourage families with disabilities on Rota to contact our offices at NMPASI, 234-7273/4 for Frances Torres or Dorain Camacho or CNMI DD Council for Lillian Ada at 664-7005/7000 or cell phone no. 287-5643 for appointment. ***(PR)***

March Against Cancer set May 22-23

The Marianas March Against Cancer Committee have had their first meeting and is announcing that this year's "March Against Cancer" event will be held on May 22-23, 2009. With only a few months away, the first "Team Captain's Meeting" is set for Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2009 at 5:30pm. This meeting will take place at the Department of Public Health Deputy Secretary's Conference room (across from the gift shop at CHC). For more information regarding this event, email Catherine Attao (attao20@yahoo.com), Chris Concepcion (chrisaconcepcion@gmail.com) or visit www.ccamarianas.org. You may also call 682-0050. The committee is encouraging all who are interested in participating to attend next week's meeting. ***(PR)***

SVES 3rd Annual Canary Walkathon

The Parent, Teacher, Students Association (PTSA) of San Vicente Elementary School will be hosting the 3rd Annual Canary Walk-a-thon this Saturday, Jan. 24, at the SVES baseball field, from 7am until noon.

Proceeds from the event will go toward the expansion of the walkways from the main highway and the covering of stairway going to the school cafeteria.

Members of the PTSA have been soliciting support for the event and welcome all donations both monetary and in-kind. For more information, call the school at (670) 237-3791/3 or 237-3761. ***(PR)***

New CPA telephone numbers

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has changed its phones to a new system, which resulted in having to change its telephone numbers for the CPA offices at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. The new system is part of efforts to streamline operations and at the same time enhance efficiency. The new number sare:

Main Telephone numbers:
(670) 237-6500
(670) 237-6501

Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) DISPATCH: (670) 237-6551

Ports Police DISPATCH: (670) 237-6529

All other CPA numbers remain the same:

Port of Saipan: (670) 664-3550

CPA Tinian: (670) 433-9294

CPA Rota: (670) 532-9497

Veterans' briefing

On Jan. 28, 2009, Gregory Reed, director of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Honolulu Hawaii, and David Larson, veteran service representative for Guam and the CNMI, will be on Saipan to give a briefing and survey of veterans' benefit needs. They will also be entertaining questions. The input of CNMI veterans is crucial for the establishment of a local Federal Veterans Benefit Office.

The briefing will be held Jan. 28, 2009, 9am-12 noon, at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs on Capital Hill, Building 1364. Any questions or further information, call Ruth Coleman at the Office of Military/ Veterans Affairs at 664-2650. ***(PR)***

Guam Vet Center to hold session on Saipan

The Guam Vet Center will be hosting an information and counseling session for all combat veterans and their dependents on Jan. 28 and 29, at the Office of Military and Veterans Affair on Capital Hill, Building 1364. Catherine Illarmo, the Department of Veterans Affairs' Team Leaders/LCSW from the Guam Vet Center, will be available on Jan. 28, 2009, from 9am to 4pm and on Jan. 29, 2009, from 9am to 12 noon.

There will also be a limited number of individual counseling appointments available. For those interested in counseling, call Illarmo at 1-671-472-7160/1 or Office of Military and Veteran Affairs executive officer Ruth Coleman at 664-2650. Any questions or for further information, call Coleman at 664-2650. ***(PR)***

Attention to families of Echo Company soldiers

The 9th MSC Family Programs Office is inviting dependents of deployed soldiers of Echo Company 100th BN 442nd and 368th MP Det. 1 for a *free* one-day Family Deployment Workshop and Youth Mini Camp on Saturday, Jan. 31, 2009, at the Pacific Islands Club from 9am to 5pm. You must register no later than Thursday, Jan. 29, 2009. For more information or to register, contact Marcela Moody, Family Program Assistance at (671) 344-5012, Saipan RDO Maj. Gregorio Sablan at 322-6671 or FRG leader Rita L. Chargualaf at 322-7814. ***(PR)***

Deadline set for filing quarterly tax returns

The Division of Revenue and Taxation is reminding all CNMI residents that the 2008 4th Quarter deadline for filing the quarterly tax returns is Monday, Feb. 2, 2009. The Division of Revenue and Taxation will be open from 7:30am to 6:30pm on Monday Feb. 2, 2009. The office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation is located at the Joeten DanDan Commercial Center. For more information call 664-1000, 664-1034 Compliance Branch, or 664-1065 Collection Branch. ***(PR)***

DEQ brigade sets COP cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality cleanup brigade will be picking up trash at Coral Ocean Point (Unai Dangkulo) on Feb. 7.

Thos who would like to volunteer may join the group on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 8am. Volunteers will clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a green brigade t-shirt. For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500. ***(DEQ)***

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND

NOTICE

NMI RETIREMENT FUND INVESTMENTS PRESENTATION

The NMI Retirement Fund's Consultant, Merrill Lynch, will be conducting a presentation of the NMI Retirement Fund's Annual Investments Report on **Monday, January 26, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe.**

In addition to providing information on the Fund's investments status, questions from participants at the presentation would be addressed accordingly by the Fund Consultants and the Board of Trustees.

We encourage the participation of key government officials and all interested members of the public, *most especially the retired and active members of the NMI Retirement Fund Program,* at this event in order to gain greater knowledge of the investments status of the Fund.

/s/ Mark A. Aguon, Administrator 01/22/09

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) and the CNMI Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), in accordance with the requirements of 40 CFR 35.912, is announcing that a public hearing will be held regarding the state priority list for wastewater projects eligible for funding under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's construction grant program. The proposed priority list reproduced below was developed in accordance with the CNMI's priority ranking system, on the basis of a number of factors including the affected population served by each project, the degree to which surface and groundwater resources would be protected, and a number of other factors which may be reviewed, upon request, at either the offices of DEQ or CUC.

2009 Proposed Project Priority Listing

1 Rehabilitation of W-8 Lift Station & Rerouting of Finasisu Collector Lines
2 Rehabilitation of Various Lift Stations (S-3,A-7,S-4,S-9,S-8,A-16,etc.)
3 Replacement of existing asbestos collection lines at Chalan Kanoa & Susupe
4 Upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Plants
5 Transmission and Collection Lines, Dandan
6 Collector Lines, San Antonio, Chalan Kanoa, Susupe
7 Transmission and Collection Lines, As Matuis Subdivision
8 STP, Transmission and Collection Lines, Kagman Village
9 Rota Wastewater Collection, Transmission and Treatment System including Outfall
10 Tinian Wastewater Collection, Transmission and Treatment System including Outfall
11 Development of Saipan Wastewater Master Plan

The public hearing will be held at the DEQ Main Conference Room located on the second floor of the Gualo Rai Center on Chalan Pale Arnold, across the road from Subway, at noon (12:00 p.m.) on Tuesday, February 24, 2009. For additional information, please contact the DEQ wastewater program staff at 664-8500.

Business

Three-quarters of stimulus to go in 18 months

WASHINGTON (AP)—Facing Republican resistance to a massive economic stimulus plan, the Obama administration on Wednesday said $3 of every $4 in the package should be spent within 18 months to have maximum impact on jobs and taxpayers.

Peter Orszag, the director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, said Wednesday that if House or Senate versions of the bill do not spend the money as quickly, the White House will work with lawmakers to achieve the 75 percent goal. Congress is working on a stimulus bill of at least $825 billion.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Orszag responded to a Congressional Budget Office assessment that money targeted for infrastructure under a House proposal would take years to be spent. He said the issues identified by CBO could be easily corrected.

"There are relatively straightforward changes to increase the spend-out on that part of the bill," Orszag said.

CBO concluded that only $26 billion out of $358 billion in infrastructure and other appropriated spending would be delivered into the economy by the Sept. 30 end of the budget year. The CBO's analysis applied only to 40 percent of the overall stimulus bill. Still, Republicans cited the study in pushing for more tax cuts and less spending

Obama

Indeed Republicans, who said they were receptive to Obama's call for a "unity of purpose," promptly tested the day-old administration. They criticized the Democratic plan and requested a meeting with the president to air their tax-cutting plans.

Congressional officials said a meeting was planned for next week.

The maneuvers illustrated Obama's governing predicament: He wants to move swiftly to confront the troubled economy while also living up to a vow to break through the traditional partisan barriers.

Obama met with his top White House economic advisers Wednesday afternoon, including Orzag, National Economic Director Lawrence Summers, White House Policy Council Director Melody Barnes and White House coordinator of energy and climate policy Carol Browner.

A senior administration official said the group discussed the status of the markets, the stimulus package and a financial industry bailout. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the meeting was private.

Pay freezes spread during brutal recession

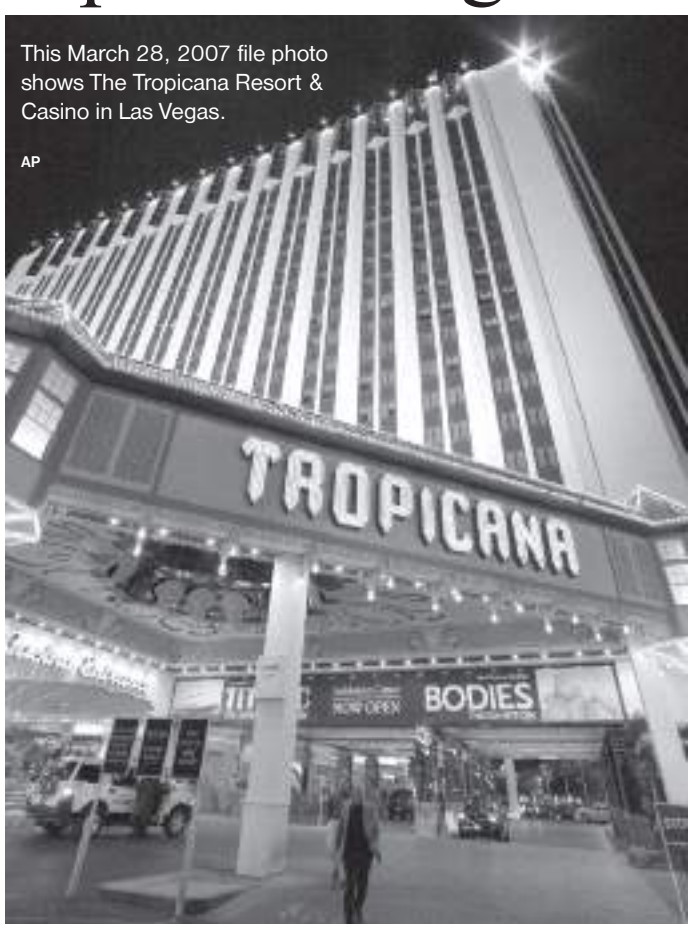
WASHINGTON (AP)—What do Tropicana Casino and Resort, Avis and the White House now have in common? They're all freezing the pay of some of their workers. It's part of a growing trend by employers facing the fallout—economic and political—from a brutal recession.

For companies, pay freezes are a key cost-cutting tool for surviving hard times.

For President Barack Obama, who ordered a pay freeze for White House employees earning over $100,000 a year, the move on his first full day in office sent a message to a nervous country: We're in this together.

"During this period of economic emergency," Obama said, "families are tightening their belts, and so should Washington."

The unemployment rate has bolted to a 16-year high of 7.2 percent. Last year, 2.6 million jobs vanished, the most since World War II. The jobless rate is expected to march upward and layoffs to pile up even with a multibillion-dollar stimulus package being crafted by Obama and Congress.



This March 28, 2007 file photo shows The Tropicana Resort & Casino in Las Vegas.

AP

More squeezed employers, though, are seeking an alternative to layoffs. They're turning to pay freezes, pay reductions and other cost-cutting options, such as ending their contributions to 401(k) accounts.

"All of that hurts, but nothing hurts more than losing a job," said Allen Sinai, chief global economist at Decision Economics Inc. "It is a growing trend as companies try to cut costs. Going forward, we will see more of this, absolutely."

The Federal Reserve has taken notice. In a recent survey of economic conditions, it observed that in some parts of the country, companies were resorting to "pay freezes or reductions in compensation."

A wide range of employers have followed suit. In some cases, they're imposing pay freezes or cuts to avoid immediate layoffs, though economists say such steps tend to lead to layoffs anyway.

Japan's central bank keeps key rate unchanged

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's central bank kept its already super-low interest rate on hold Thursday as widely expected but sharply downgraded its economic outlook amid an ever-deepening recession.

In a unanimous vote, the Bank of Japan's policy board chose to keep the overnight call rate target at 0.1 percent.

"Exports have been decreasing substantially reflecting a slowdown in overseas economies, and domestic demand has become weaker against the background of declining corporate profits and the worsening employment and income situation in the household sector," the central bank said in its statement.

"Under these circumstances, economic conditions have been deteriorating significantly and are likely to continue deteriorating for the time being."

The BOJ now predicts that the world's second largest economy will shrink 1.8 percent this fiscal year through March and will contract 2 percent next fiscal year.

But with rates already super low, the Bank of Japan has little room to maneuver on the interest rate front, despite renewed concerns this week about the health of the global banking sector.

China's economy slowed sharply in 4th quarter

BEIJING (AP)—China's economic slump deepened in the fourth quarter as the impact of the global crisis spread, data showed Thursday, adding to the threat of more heavy job losses and possible unrest.

Economic growth in the three months through December plunged to 6.8 percent compared with a year earlier, down from 9 percent the previous quarter, the government said. It was the weakest quarter since at least 1992, when Beijing began reporting quarterly economic data, Goldman Sachs said.

"The international financial crisis is deepening and spreading, with continuing negative impact on the domestic economy," said Ma Jiantang, the commissioner of the National Bureau of Statistics, at a news conference. In a report, the government promised steps to ensure "a harmonious and stable society."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Asian stocks up despite signs of deepening slump

HONG KONG (AP)—Asian stock markets rose modestly Thursday, with Tokyo's index up more than 1 percent, as gains on Wall Street offset alarming new signs the region's economies were slowing faster than expected amid plummeting demand for their goods. Japan's Nikkei 225 stock average gained 96.75 points, or 1.2 percent, at 7,998.39 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 1.7 percent to 12,799.76. South Korea's Kospi added 1.5 percent to 1,120.74, while markets in mainland China, Australia, Singapore and India also gained. Despite the modest rises, trade was cautious as investors digested a round of bleak reports about some of the region's biggest economies. China's economic slump deepened in the fourth quarter, with growth sliding to 6.8 percent from 9 percent the previous quarter and 10.6 percent in the first quarter. For the full year, China's economy expanded by 9 percent—its slowest yearly growth since 2001.

Japan exports post record drop in December

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's exports to the world plummeted at record pace in December, the government said Thursday, as the specter of a deep global recession permeated every continent and choked off demand for the country's cars and gadgets. Exports fell for the third straight month, plunging 35 percent from the same month a year ago to 4.83 trillion yen ($54.27 billion), the Ministry of Finance said. The figure marks the steepest fall on record, surpassing November's 26.7 percent retreat. Japan's exports to North America and Europe remained anemic, and even demand from emerging markets, which had helped offset declines elsewhere, dropped. The figures underscore the vulnerability of Japan's export-dependent economy during global downturns, and point toward more cuts in jobs, output and profit forecasts in the coming months. Already, big brands including Toyota Motor Corp. and Sony Corp. have slashed thousands of workers and scaled back factory lines.

Parsons to become chairman at Citigroup

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup Inc. said Wednesday that board member Richard Parsons—the former CEO of Time Warner—will be taking over as chairman. Parsons succeeds Win Bischoff, who became chairman in December 2007 after the company let go of its embattled CEO and chairman at the time, Charles Prince. The move is effective Feb. 23. Bischoff is not putting himself up for re-election at the board's annual meeting this spring, and will retire later this year, Citigroup said. The ailing bank has suffered five straight quarters of losses and received $45 billion in government aid as it struggles to stay afloat amid the credit crisis. Last week, the company said it would reorganize into two units as it reported a fourth-quarter loss of $8.29 billion. Citigroup's board has been the target of much scrutiny among investors for allowing the bank to invest so heavily in the risky housing market.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA	3,431.90 Up 37.10 (+1.09%)
HONG KONG	12,798.75 Up 215.12 (+1.71%)
JAKARTA	1,327.89 Up 6.44 (+0.49%)
TOKYO	8,051.74 Up 150.10 (+1.90%)
K. LUMPUR	878.21 Up 4.80 (+0.55%)
MANILA	1,863.52 Up 23.40 (+1.27)
SINGAPORE	1,733.57 Up 29.05 (+1.70%)
SEOUL	1,116.23 Up 12.62 (+1.14%)
BANGKOK	441.22 Up 9.99 (+2.32%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	8,228.10 +279.01
S&P	840.24 +35.02
NASDAQ	1,507.07 +66.21

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.5141
British Pound	0.7008
Canadian Dollar	1.2579
Chinese Yuan	6.8416
Euro	0.7676
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7594
Indian Rupee	48.9400
Indonesian Rupiah	11,225.0000
Japanese Yen	89.3650
Malaysian Ringgit	3.6130
New Zealand Dollar	1.8783
Philippine Peso	47.3350
Singapore Dollar	1.4943
South Korean Won	1,368.4000
Swiss Franc	1.1562
Taiwan Dollar	33.5340
Thailand Baht	34.9100

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

Obama's whirlwind first day: economy, war and more

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a first-day whirlwind, President Barack Obama showcased efforts to revive the economy on Wednesday, summoned top military officials to the White House to chart a new course in Iraq and eased into the daunting thicket of Middle East diplomacy.

"What an opportunity we have to change this country," said the 47-year-old chief executive, who also issued new ethics rules for his administration, hosted a reception at the presidential mansion for 200 inauguration volunteers and guests selected by an Internet lottery and even took the oath of office again after it was flubbed Tuesday.

After dancing at inaugural balls with first lady Michelle Obama past midnight, Obama entered the Oval Office for the first time as president in early morning. He read a good luck note left behind by President George W. Bush, then began breaking cleanly with his predecessor's policies.

Aides circulated a draft of an executive order that would close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, within a year and halt all war crimes trials in the meantime.

Closing the site "would further the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States and the interests of justice," read the draft prepared for the new president's signature. A copy was obtained by The Associated Press, and an aide said privately that Obama would sign a formal order on Thursday.

AP

President Barack Obama, accompanied by Vice President Joe Biden speaks in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2009.

Some of the 245 detainees currently held at Guantanamo would be released, while others would be transferred elsewhere and later put on trial under terms to be determined.

Obama's Cabinet was moving closer to completion.

At the Capitol, the Senate confirmed Hillary Rodham Clinton as secretary of state after a one-day delay forced by Republicans. The vote was 94-2, and spectators seated in the galleries erupted in applause when it was announced.

Treasury-designate Timothy Geithner emerged unscathed from his confirmation hearing, apologizing for having failed to pay $34,000 in taxes earlier in the decade.

To the evident anger of Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Republicans on the panel invoked long-standing rules to postpone a vote on Eric Holder's appointment as attorney general.

Counting Clinton, seven Cabinet members have been confirmed so far, as have the two top officials at the Office of Management and Budget.

Obama's schedule for the day included separate sessions on the economy and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The new president has pledged to take bold steps to revive the economy, which is struggling through the worst recession since the Great Depression. Last week, he won approval to use $350 billion in leftover financial industry bailout funds.

He presided over the White House meeting on the economy as the House Appropriations Committee moved toward approval of $358 billion in new spending, part of the economic stimulus package making its way to his desk.

The new commander in chief held his first meeting in the Situation Room, where he, Vice President Joe Biden and senior military and foreign policy officials discussed war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama campaigned on a pledge to withdraw U.S. combat forces from Iraq within 16 months, and to beef up the commitment in Afghanistan. Obama asked the Pentagon to do whatever additional planning necessary to "execute a responsible military drawdown from Iraq."

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP09-DPW-039

SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 20, 2009 • TIME: 3:00 P.M.

"PEST CONTROL SERVICES - TRANSFER STATION AND MARPI SOLID WASTE FACILITY (MSWF)"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY IN LOWERBASE DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE IS SCHEDULED FOR 10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, FEBRUARY 04, 2009 AT DPW - SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT TRANSFER STATION, CONFERENCE ROOM. QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE IN WRITING TO MR. BLAS T. MARNAS, ACTING DIRECTOR OF SOLID WASTE BY FACSIMILE TO (760) 322-2762, NO LATER THAN (FEBRUARY 09, 2009, CLOSE OF BUSINESS)

PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE PROPOSAL IF PREFERECED IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **DIEGO B. SONGSONG**
SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Tel. (670) 234-6866, 234-9447, 234-7689, 234-7670 • Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that a Special Meeting of the Board will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMARY MATTERS
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
III. TOTTOTVILLE
IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS
V. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VI. OTHER MATTERS
VII. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ **MERCED M. TOMOKANE**
Vice Chairwoman of the Board

NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency

Northern Mariana Islands RETIREMENT FUND

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold a ***Special meeting*** and its ***Annual Money Manager's meeting*** on **Monday, January 26, 2009 to Wednesday, January 28, 2009 starting at 9:00 a.m., on each date,** at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. NEW BUSINESS
A. 2009 Money Managers' Meeting
B. Pre-Hearing Conference - E.D. Pangelinan Appeal
C. Board Resolution – Freeze on Refunds
D. Appeal Hearing Deliberation (NMIRF 07-005)
IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION
V. MISCELLANEOUS
A. Announcement(s)
B. Next Meeting
C. Adjournment

/s/ JUAN T. GUERRERO
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 234-5498 ext. 2300/01/02 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: procurement@nmcnet.edu, Website: www.nmcnet.edu

Invitation for Bid

NMC No.: IFB 09-008

CREES TINIAN FENCE LINE PROJECT

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Services Department (CREES) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement and installation of Chain Link Fence and Gates for CREES Tinian Facility due on or before February 06th, 2009. In order to be considered for this transaction, all persons, firms or corporations responding to this request must provide information requested in the specifications and scope of work. **Any bid received that does not provide the requested information may be rejected**. Bids rejected will not be returned to the owner, but the owner will be notified.

DUE DATE/TIME: Friday, February 06th, 2009 10:00 a.m.
PUBLIC BID OPENING: Wednesday, February 11th, 2009 at 10:30 a.m.

Specifications and Scope of Work may be picked up at the NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, As Terlaje Campus, Saipan, Monday to Friday between the hours of 8: 30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:30 p.m.

Bid Packages are due February 06th, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. Saipan time at the Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor. Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with NMC Procurement Regulations. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, **"Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement. This procurement is funded, wholly, from federal sources. For bidders located outside of the CNMI**: You may request a copy of the Invitation for Bid via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita C. Camacho (acamacho@nmcnet.edu)

All bidders are hereby notified that the Northern Marianas College and CNMI Government will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals for any reason and waive any defect in said proposals, or cancel in part or its entirety this RFP, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the bidder to prepare a response this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the bidder. All submittals shall become the property of NMC and will not be returned.

Approved by the following:

Anita C. Camacho
NMC, Procurement Manager

Ross S. Manglona
Director, NMC CREES

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N O T I C E
(December 31, 2008)

Pursuant to Subsection 5.2 of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation's (NMHC) Revised Administrative Plan (2007), NMHC wants to respectfully inform the general public that it will **STOP** accepting applications for its Saipan-based Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program beginning on January 31, 2009 due to the following reason(s):

1) There are currently 658 active Saipan applicants on the HCV program's waiting list and no available vouchers.

Please be further advised that the Tinian and Rota-based Section 8 HCV Programs will continue with its application intake and shall not be affected by this Notice. Similarly, the Section 8 Multifamily programs for all three (3) islands will also remain open.

NMHC will notify the public as soon as it is ready to begin accepting applications for its Saipan-based Section 8 HCV Program.

Thank you and should have any questions, please feel free to contact Kimo Rosario, Program and Housing Division Manager, at NMHC's Main Office on Saipan.

ACROSS THE NATION

Kennedy withdraws from consideration for NY Senate

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—Caroline Kennedy withdrew from consideration for the U.S. Senate seat once held by her slain uncle, Bobby Kennedy, after a night of turmoil and uncertainty over her intentions. "I informed Governor Paterson today that for personal reasons I am withdrawing my name from consideration for the United States Senate," she said in a one-sentence statement released after midnight. Her spokesman, Stefan Friedman, wouldn't comment further. Her uncle, Sen. Edward Kennedy, suffered a seizure on Inauguration Day. Spokesmen for Caroline Kennedy and for Gov. David Paterson, who will make the appointment to fill the seat, wouldn't comment. The hours of mixed signals Wednesday night were the latest twist in the Kennedy effort, which began with popular support that withered after she drew criticism in her brief upstate tour and early press interviews.

Possible bird remains found in downed jet's engine

WASHINGTON (AP)—Investigators said Wednesday they have found the remains of what may be a bird in the engine of the US Airways jet that made a dramatic landing in New York's Hudson River. The National Transportation Safety Board said an examination of the Airbus 320's right engine revealed evidence of "soft body damage" and that "organic material" was found in the engine and on the wings and fuselage. Samples of the material have gone to the Agriculture Department for a complete DNA analysis, the board said. A single feather was found attached to a flap track on the wing and will be examined by experts at the Smithsonian Institution. The pilot of Flight 1549, Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, reported a "double bird strike" and a loss of power in both engines before gliding the plane to an emergency river landing last week. All 155 people on board the flight to Charlotte, N.C., survived.

Senate confirms Clinton as secretary of state

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate confirmed Hillary Rodham Clinton as secretary of state Wednesday as President Barack Obama moved to make his imprint on U.S. foreign policy, mobilizing a fresh team of veteran advisers and reaching out to world leaders. The Senate voted 94-2, with Republican Sens. David Vitter of Louisiana and Jim DeMint of South Carolina opposing.

Clinton

Republicans and Democrats alike said her swift confirmation was necessary so that Obama could begin tackling the major foreign policy issues at hand, including two wars, increased violence in the Middle East and the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran.

"It is essential that we provide the president with the tools and resources he needs to effect change, and that starts with putting a national security team in place as soon as possible," said Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Obama's presidential rival, Sen. John McCain, was among those who spoke in Clinton's favor.

"This nation has come together in a way that it has not for some time," said the Arizona Republican, on the Senate floor for the first time since the inauguration.

Voters "want us to work together and get to work," McCain said.

As the Senate debated Clinton's appointment, Obama wasted no time in his first day at the White House. According to a White House spokesman, Obama placed telephone calls to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Jordan's King Abdullah II and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The administration also planned to name former Senate Democratic leader George J. Mitchell as Clinton's special envoy for the Middle East. Dennis Ross, a longtime U.S. negotiator, was also expected to advise Clinton on Mideast policy, according to officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the move.

Clinton planned to report to the State Department on Thursday, where she was expected to address employees in the main lobby that morning—a tradition of sorts for state secretaries on their first day on the job.

The former first lady received overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress despite lingering concerns by some Republicans that her husband's charitable fundraising overseas could pose conflicts of interest.

Sen. Richard Lugar, the ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, proposed that former President Bill Clinton's foundation reject foreign contributions. But Hillary Clinton rejected Lugar's proposal, contending that the foundation's plan to disclose annually its list of donors and a range of its contributions already exceeds legal requirements.

Lugar said he hoped Clinton would re-examine her position but supported her appointment, citing her "remarkable qualifications" and "pressing global issues."

Vitter and DeMint, both members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said they were unsatisfied. Last week, Vitter cast the sole opposing vote in the committee's 16-1 endorsement of Clinton. DeMint voted in favor of Clinton on the committee because he said he didn't want to obstruct a full Senate vote on her appointment, but ultimately did not support her nomination.

Following the vote, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee endorsed Susan Rice to become U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, a post Obama has elevated to the Cabinet level.

Meanwhile, the Senate considered other appointments by Obama.

Treasury Secretary-designate Timothy Geithner apologized to the Senate Finance Committee and said he was careless for failing to pay $34,000 in Social Security and Medicare taxes earlier this decade. The committee planned to vote on his appointment on Thursday.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendment of the Official Saipan Zoning Map (Rezones)

We ask for your comments on proposed amendments (rezones) to the Official Saipan Zoning Maps, sheets 23 (San Vicente), 24 (San Antonio), and 26 (As Lito).

A public hearing will be held:
Date: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Time: 6:00 pm
Place: Zoning Office Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan

The proposed map changes may be viewed at
Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan
Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp
(publications page)

After the public hearing, the Zoning Board will make a decision on whether to approve any or all of the changes to the Official Zoning Maps.

Comments on the proposals may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office and must be received at the Zoning Office by 12:00 pm, Wednesday, February 25, 2009. Send written comments via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Saipan Zoning Law of 2007.

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NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST

VANESSA C. IGINOEF/ VALERIO MENDIOLA CABRERA AND MARIANA ALDAN CABRERA (collectively "Trustor"), on or about June 21, 1985, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on June 26, 1985, under Document No. 85-1210 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 011 H 16, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 621 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 011 H 00, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 702, ON THE 1ST DAY OF MARCH, 1971.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on November 24, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$56,150.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE
UNDER POWER OF SALE
IN DEED OF TRUST

LORETTA K. DELEON GUERRERO ("Trustor"), on or about June 29, 1998, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on June 30, 1998, under Document No. 98-1942 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 010 K 05, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 892 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 010 K 01 DATED AUGUST 19, 1987, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 87-2911 DATED AUGUST 19, 1987, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on November 24, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$73,440.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE
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IN DEED OF TRUST

GINA K. SOMORANG/ SOLEDAD K. SOMORANG AND MIGUEL O. SOMORANG (collectively "Trustor"), on or about May 02, 1984, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on May 03, 1984, under Document No. 84-686 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 005 I 548, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 885 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEYE'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 2084/82, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 14232 DATED MAY 14, 1982, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on November 24, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$59,790.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE
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VINCENT N. ITAMAN/ ROSA L. TAMAN/ VINCENTE E. TAMAN (collectively "Trustor"), on or about April 27, 1984, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on April 27, 1984 under Document No. 84-659 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NUMBER 005 I 531, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 745 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON THE DIVISION OF LANDS AND SURVEY'S OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 2084/82, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 14232 DATED MAY 14, 1982, THE DESCRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on December 10, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$77,690.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

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Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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Asia

ASIAN BRIEFS

Sri Lanka says it seized rebels' operation center

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—The Sri Lankan military says it has captured what appears to have been the Tamil Tiger rebels main operations center in the north. Military spokesman Brig. Udaya Nanayakkara said Thursday that soldiers found detailed maps of the military's deployments as well as rebel positions in an empty building in the Mullaittivu district. The building had an auditorium and an underground bunker. Nanayakkara said the rebels appeared to have vacated the area ahead of the government advance and must have set up another operations center in their remaining stronghold. The rebels were not available for comment.

US: Coalition troops kill 6 Taliban in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—U.S. coalition troops killed six Taliban during a raid on militants blamed for roadside bomb attacks in southern Afghanistan, a coalition statement said Thursday. The troops were hunting Wednesday for a Taliban commander involved in a roadside bombing network and the movement of foreign fighters in Zabul province, the statement said. They clashed with suspected Taliban militants at compounds in the Daychopan district of Zabul province after the militants refused to leave peacefully and fired at the troops, the statement said. Five militants were killed in that clash. Another militant firing at the troops from behind large rocks was killed in an airstrike, the statement said.

Army: Indian soldier fatally shoots 6 colleagues

GAUHATI, India (AP)—An Indian paramilitary soldier shot and killed six of his colleagues with an assault rifle, then fled their military camp in a remote and dangerous outpost in northeastern India, the military said Thursday. Officials are investigating the Wednesday night shooting and have launched a manhunt for the soldier, a member of the Assam Rifles paramilitary troop whose name was not immediately released, said Maj. Shamsher Jung, an Assam Rifles spokesman. "The trooper first trained his assault rifle on a senior officer following an argument, killing him. When five fellow troopers rushed in after hearing gunshots, the berserk soldier sprayed bullets on them," said Jung. It was not clear what prompted the killings in Ukhrul district, 55 miles (90 kilometers) northeast of the state capital of Imphal, Jung said.

Thai PM pledges to work with UN refugee agency

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—Thailand's prime minister said international agencies looking into alleged abuse of illegal migrants by Thai authorities can speak with officials, but he stopped short of saying the groups could meet with the migrants themselves. Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's announcement Wednesday came a day after the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees asked for access to the illegal migrants, several of whom the organization says are in Thai custody.

Pakistan nabs suspect linked to 2005 London bombs

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Police in northwest Pakistan acting on a tip from the U.S. have arrested an al-Qaida suspect believed to have links to the 2005 London transit bombings that killed 52 people, two Pakistani security officials said Thursday.

The suspect was identified as Zabi ul Taifi, a Saudi national. He was among seven suspects caught in a Wednesday raid near the main northwest city of Peshawar—while U.S. officials waited nearby, the Pakistani officials said.

Pockets of Pakistan's northwest region bordering Afghanistan are considered havens for al-Qaida and Taliban militants and potential hideouts for top al-Qaida leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahri. The U.S. has pushed Pakistan to go after the militants, while Pakistan has repeatedly requested that American officials share more intelligence to aid that effort.

The officials did not specify exactly what role Taifi is alleged to have played in the 2005 attacks in London, which were the deadliest on the British capital since World War II. However, the officials told The Associated Press that the "well planned" raid stemmed from a tip from American officials.

The officials said the Americans didn't participate in the raid, but were not far away from the militant hideout.

The suspects were in Pakistani custody and being questioned Thursday, said the officials, who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to media.

"We have reasons to believe that we got the right man who had played a role in the 2005 attacks in London," said one official, who said he received the information from security agents in Peshawar.

The British embassy spokeswomen could not immediately be reached for comment Thursday, but Britain, which is home to many in the Pakistani diaspora, has long had concerns about terror activity in the South Asian country.

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NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

REGINA T. CASRO ("Trustor"), on or about October 23, 1984, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on October 23, 1984, under Document No. 84-2264 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NUMBER 005 B 09, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 407 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 005 B 00, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 832, ON THE 9TH DAY OF JUNE, 1971.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on November 24, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$76,150.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
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NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

IGNACIO A. CABRERA AND ANA B. CABRERA (collectively "Trustor"), on or about October 20, 1983, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on October 21, 1983 under Document No. 83-90 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 006 T 18, AND CONTAINING AN AREA OF 901 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 006 T 01, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 18011, ON THE 7TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1983

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on December 10, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$79,150.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

LUCIA M. DELEON GUERRERO ("Trustor"), on or about May 23, 1985, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on May 23, 1985, under Document No. 85-0991 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

TRACT NUMBER 20472-6, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 907 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED ON DRAWING/CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 2064/82, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND COMMISSION AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 14154, ON THE 26TH OF MARCH, 1982.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on November 24, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$121,150.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

LARS I. PALACIOS AND ROSARIO E. PALACIOS (collectively "Trustor"), on or about September 17, 1985, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on September 19, 1985, under Document No. 85-1829 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NUMBER 005 I 145, CONTAINING AN AREA OF 1,056 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS, AS SHOWN ON CADASTRAL PLAT NUMBER 005 I 02, THE ORIGINAL OF WHICH WAS REGISTERED WITH THE LAND REGISTRY AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 16707, ON MARCH 11, 1983. THE DESCRIPTION BEING INCORPATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on December 10, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$85,150.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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NOTICE OF SALE UNDER POWER OF SALE IN DEED OF TRUST

JOHN ALAN C. KING AND CARLA MARIE DLC. KING (collectively"Trustor"), on or about November 08, 2002, gave and delivered to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation ("Trustee"), acting on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Office ("USDA"), formerly known as Farmers Home Administration, United States of America ("FmHA"), a Deed of Trust upon certain real property hereinafter described, which Deed of Trust was recorded on December 12, 2003, under Document No. 03-2781 to secure payment of a Promissory Note of the Trustor to the Trustee, acting on behalf of the USDA, Rural Development Office.

The Deed of Trust and this Notice of Sale affect the property hereafter described:

LOT NO. 330 R 321 CONTAINING AS AREA OF 838 SQUARE METERS, MORE OR LESS AS SHOWN ON THE DIVEISION OF LANDS AND SURVEYS OFFICIAL CADASTRAL PLAT NO. 330 R 08 DATED NOVEMBER 19, 1996, COMMONWEALTH RECORDER'S FILE NO. 97-746, DATED APRIL 02, 1996, THE DESRIPTION THEREIN BEING INCROPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE.

The Trustor has defaulted on payment of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust, and by reason of said default, Trustee issued its Notice of Default and served to Trustor on December 02, 2008. More than thirty (30) days have passed since the default notice was served on Trustor and said default has not been cured.

Pursuant to 2 CMC § 4622(b)(2), NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Trustee will, on February 13, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., at the office of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, Garapan, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, under power of sale contained in the Deed of Trust, sell the above described parcel of real property at public auction to the highest qualified bidder, to satisfy the obligations secured by said Deed of Trust. The minimum bid offer shall be not less than **$65,980.00**. Sealed bids will be opened at the auction and those present will be given the opportunity to submit an additional bid, thereby, outbidding the highest sealed bid amount received by NMHC and opened on the date of the auction.

Sealed bids must be addressed to Ms. Merced M. Tomokane, Acting Chairwoman of the Board, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 and must also be received no later than **February 12, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. All bids received from outside the Commonwealth must be received no later than February 12, 2009 at 4:00 p.m. Untimely sealed bids will be rejected.**

The sale shall be without warranty as to the title or interest to be conveyed or as to the property under the Deed of Trust, other than that the Trustee is the lawful holder of such Deed of Trust. The purchase price shall be payable by cash, certified check or cashier's check to NMHC and shall be paid within 72 hours from time of sale.

Trustee reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to cancel or extend the date, time and place for sale of such property. Any prospective buyer must be a person authorized by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to hold title to real property in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 12th day of January, 2009.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

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World

AP

Palestinian Akram Abu Roka is treated for burns at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip, Sunday, Jan. 11, 2009.

First war tally: 1,284 Gazans dead, while 4,336 wounded

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—Squatting in the rubble, his briefcase perched atop his knees, the human rights researcher interviewed residents of a house shelled by Israel as he compiled a list of Gazans killed and wounded during Israel's offensive against Hamas.

Yasser Abdel Ghafar's work is part of a painstaking endeavor by the Palestinian Center for Human Rights to count the casualties of the 23-day war. The group released a final tally Wednesday, saying 1,284 Gazans were killed and 4,336 wounded, the vast majority civilians.

Israel has accused Hamas of inflating the civilian casualties, saying it has the names of more than 700 Hamas militants killed in the fighting.

The two sides disagree on the death toll, particularly the ratio of combatants and civilians.

On Wednesday, fieldworker Abdel Ghafar worked to uncover the circumstances of how one family lost its home and two relatives.

As family members and neighbors sat on plastic chairs in an alley nearby, Abdel Ghafar spoke quietly to 28-year-old Rami Najar, who was in the three-story house in Khan Younis close to Israel's border when it came under fire last week.

His 75-year-old grandfather Khalil Najar and the elderly man's 7-year-old granddaughter, Alla, were killed in the attack, which reduced the house to rubble.

"Were there any armed men near the house?" Abdel Ghafar asked at one point. No, he didn't see any, said Rami Najar, whose right leg was wounded in the shelling.

Using his briefcase as a writing table, the researcher took down the survivor's story as the two sat on a huge chunk of concrete.

Congo says Rwandan forces will observe, not fight

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—Congo's invitation to its longtime enemy Rwanda to deploy up to 2,000 troops marked an extraordinary reversal of alliances, but the Congolese government said Wednesday the Rwandan forces were there only to observe, not to fight Hutu militias.

Some fear the presence of Rwandan soldiers could spark more violence or lead to further destabilization in Congo. And the unusual deal may already be facing opposition: U.N.-backed Radio Okapi quoted the head of Congo's National Assembly, Vital Kamerhe, as saying he was shocked by the news and had not been informed about it beforehand.

Congo allowed the Rwandan troops to cross its border Tuesday, ostensibly as observers, to help disarm deeply entrenched Rwandan Hutu militias who fled to Congo after Rwanda's 1994 genocide, Congo government spokesman Lambert Mende said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Iran: Obama must seek 'new' Mideast foreign policy

CAIRO, Egypt (AP)—Iran said Wednesday it is "ready for new approaches" from President Barack Obama as, across the Islamic world, countries cautiously welcomed his promise of mutual respect between the U.S. and Muslims. Despite the reception, it remained clear that Iran and postwar Gaza will pose early tests of Obama's inauguration speech offer to the Muslim world to "extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist." Obama, who called the leaders of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and Jordan Wednesday to voice his commitment to Arab-Israeli peace, said while campaigning that he would seek dialogue with Iran to defuse the yearslong confrontation over Tehran's nuclear ambitions and support of militant groups around the Middle East. Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki struck a moderate tone soon after Obama's inaugural address, telling the country's state-run English language network, Press TV, "We are ready for new approaches by the United States."

Argentine prez: Fidel Castro 'believes in Obama'

HAVANA (AP)—Fidel Castro watched the U.S. inauguration on television and said Wednesday that Barack Obama seems "like a man who is absolutely sincere," Argentina's president said after meeting with the ailing Cuban icon. "Fidel believes in Obama," Cristina Fernandez said. The meeting with Fernandez, just before she ended a four-day visit to Cuba, dispelled persistent rumors that the 82-year-old Castro had suffered a stroke or lapsed into a coma in recent days. "I was with Fidel about an hour or more," she told reporters at the airport as she left. "We were chatting, conversing. He looked good." Fernandez said Castro wore the track suit that has become his trademark since he fell ill in July 2006 and vanished from public view. A spokesman said the two met alone.

Off the Wall

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Job seeker accused of robbing Subway restaurant

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—It's a safe bet that he won't get the job. Omaha police said a man who asked for and began filling out a job application at a local Subway restaurant held up the store. Investigators said the man was in the middle of filling out the application when he pulled a knife and demanded money, the fled on foot with an undisclosed amount of cash. Subway was offering up to a $5,000 cash reward for the arrest of anyone involved in the robberies of several metro-area Subway restaurants.

Family tells police their teen broke into church

WAUSAU, Wis. (AP)—A Wausau teenager who faces a felony burglary charge for a church-break-in can thank his family for the arrest. Court records said an 18-year-old teen's father and sister told investigators he admitted using a golf club to break a glass window at St. Michael Catholic Church and crawling inside last weekend. The criminal complaint said the teen denied the allegations, including that he drank half of a bottle of wine at the church. The teen was charged Tuesday with burglary, theft, criminal damage to property and six counts of bail jumping. A judge set bail at $1,000 cash. Court records said $30 was stolen from a wooden collection box in the church and a five-pointed star was scratched into a wooded table.

Texas boys find 95-year-old's long-lost class ring

LUFKIN, Texas (AP)—Franklin Weeks figures he lost his college class ring sometime in the 1980s while helping his church put in new playground equipment. Luke and Sam Lytle can vouch for the 95-year-old Lufkin man's theory. They found the missing ring—Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, Class of 1937—on Monday while testing their new metal detector at the Ryan Chapel Church playground in Diboll. Twelve-year-old Luke says he and his 8-year-old brother thought about selling it to a gold reclamation shop, but his conscience dictated a search for its owner. An Internet search using the initials engraved inside the ring traced it to Weeks. He gave them $20 and told them, "I hope you keep on hunting. Pretty soon you might find something you can keep."

Man swaps empty lobster shell for crab legs

AMSTERDAM, N.Y. (AP)—After he finished his lobster dinner, an upstate New York man apparently was still hungry for seafood so he swapped the lobster shell for crab legs—and now he faces a petit larceny charge. Montgomery County Sheriff's deputies said a 57-year-old man brought back a reassembled lobster shell to his local Price Chopper store and claimed the crustacean was spoiled. The store manager was about to let him trade the lobster for a $27 bag of king crab legs when he discovered the lobster was just a shell. Deputies said the man ran from the store clutching the crab legs when he was confronted. Deputies said the man had already devoured the crab legs when they caught up with him at home. He was given an appearance ticket to answer the larceny charge in court.

Lucky fan wins $1M after goal scored at 10:00 mark

CHICAGO (AP)—The Chicago Blackhawks lost to the Minnesota Wild Monday but one of the team's fans won big. Right wing Martin Havlat scored Chicago's lone goal at the 10:00 mark of the second period, earning a random audience member $1 million as part of a promotion with the Illinois State Lottery. The winner sat in a seat that was selected in the first period at the United Center. The lucky fan's name hasn't been released.

Woman says she was told to use iPod to pay cabbie

NEW YORK (AP)—The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is investigating an incident where a California woman said she was forced to use her iPod as payment for a cab ride. Natalie Lenhart, 20, of Sacramento, took a cab to the airport in early December, but her credit card was declined. The driver called 911, and Port Authority police responded. Lenhart was told she had to give the driver some compensation, so she turned over the iPod. A spokeswoman for the Port Authority said the incident was being investigated by the internal affairs office. The story was first reported by the New York Post.

Fleeing suspect picks the wrong place to hide

PHOENIX (AP)—A suspect who ran away from a traffic stop on Wednesday chose the wrong place to hide when he slipped under a parked moving truck—and then was run over when the driver pulled away. The Arizona Department of Public Safety said an officer stopped a 26-year-old man in west Phoenix just before 7 a.m. after he ran a red light. The man gave the officer his license, then ran away and disappeared behind a convenience store. As the officer searched for him, the moving truck driver got back in his truck and started to drive away, running over the suspect. The officer stopped the truck and called help for his suspect, who complained of back pain. The man had a suspended driver license and warrants for DUI and leaving an accident scene. He'll be booked into jail after treatment.

Dog-gone-it! Man loses dog, river swallows car

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP)—A man driven to find his lost dog also lost his car after he drove onto the frozen Black River in St. Clair County, locked himself out of the idling vehicle, then watched as heat from the 1994 Buick's exhaust pipe melted the ice beneath it. WPHM-AM, the Detroit Free Press and the Times Herald in Port Huron reported that a police dive team were expected Wednesday to help pull the car from the frigid river off Port Huron Township, about 55 miles northeast of Detroit. The newspapers said the Buick was a loaner while the man's vehicle is being repaired at a collision shop.

Feces-throwing monkey on the loose in Tampa Bay

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—Wildlife officials said a rhesus monkey known to throw feces when mad is on the loose in Tampa Bay. Authorities have been trying to capture the primate since Tuesday afternoon, but it managed to evade a bucket truck and tranquilizer dart. Gary Morse with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission says the adult male is thought to have escaped from an unlicensed source. It was last seen in Clearwater. The monkey is not considered dangerous.

Man crashes into truck, business, fence and a tree

OLDSMAR, Fla. (AP)—Authorities said an Oldsmar man crashed into a parked pick-up truck, a business, a fence and a tree before he finally landed in the Pinellas County Jail. According to a news release, a 42-year-old man left a liquor store Tuesday night, climbed into his car and backed into the truck. He then rammed the truck through the front window of the business he had just left. But the man kept driving, plowing through a fence and crashing into a vacant business. He hit a tree while he was trying to flee the scene and witnesses held him until deputies arrived. The suspect was taken to a hospital with injuries that weren't life threatening.

Science & Technology

Photo programs add tools but still need sharpening

By ROB PEGORARO
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

For most of its life, consumer photo-editing software has looked up to the expensive but powerful programs used by professional photographers. Now it may be turning to a simpler source of inspiration: the software embedded in many digital cameras.

If a new camera can detect a friend's face in the picture, fix any red-eye effects and upload the shot automatically over the nearest WiFi connection, why should a photo-album application leave those tasks to you?

Two new programs, Google's free Picasa (Windows XP or Vista, picasa.com) and Adobe's $99.99 Photoshop Elements 7 (XP or Vista, adobe.com/products/photoshopelwin/), address that question with a few automatic photo-management tools of their own.

And if you could only mash up these two applications' best features, you'd have an unbeatable program. Instead, you have to pick your disappointments.

Picasa 3, released in beta-test form in early September, adds valuable editing and sharing features but does little to improve already inadequate photo-organizing tools.

The best addition to its palette may be a "Sync to Web" option that uploads a set of photos to Google's Picasa Web Albums site, then updates the pictures online to mirror any changes you make to them in Picasa. (To get changes made online to appear on a computer, however, I had to select a "Refresh Online Status" command.) This eliminates the need to re-upload a picture after fiddling with it and ensures a current backup of your work.

Editing your photos gets a little easier in this version as well. Its red-eye fix no longer requires you to select each eyeball, and you can wipe out scratches and blemishes in old pictures with a simple, effective retouch command.

But Picasa 3 persists in assuming that you will first sort your photos by the day you took them, resulting in a lengthy list of date-specific folders that you'll eventually want to consolidate—or ignore in favor of collecting photos in a separate series of albums. Picasa lets you assign tags ("family," "D.C.," "field trip") to pictures, but its tagging interface lacks the obviousness of the label system in Google's Gmail.

Picasa 3 adds one new way to sift through your shots, a "Select photos with faces" command. This automatic tool can err—it thought an antique streetlight in front of a building hid a human face. But it can also speed the process of picking out shots of friends. Its real potential awaits in Picasa Web Albums, where a "name tag" option can find friends in photos for you.

This update to Picasa throws in some nifty, if not quite essential, additions to its photo-sharing options, such as fancier collages of pictures and movies woven together from a series of photos.

Adobe's Photoshop Elements 7 brings a different mix of upgrades and oversights. Its photo-management features, among the few to offer the same flexibility and simplicity as Apple's iPhoto, take a step up with Adobe's "Find Faces for Tagging" command, which scans through your entire photo library for any portraits. As in Picasa, it misses some shots and mistakenly grabs others, but Photoshop Elements makes its tagging commands far easier to discover and use than Picasa's.

Like its competitor, Photoshop Elements adds automatic online synchronization, in this case wired to Adobe's free Photoshop.com photo-sharing site. (The company pushes its $49.99/year Plus plan, which upgrades your Web storage from 2 to 20 gigabytes, as a discounted bundle with Elements.) Changes flowed back and forth reliably, with the exception of a picture that appeared upright in the program but sideways on the site.

This new release offers an automatic red-eye fix, plus a wealth of other editing tools. Among other reality-distorting options, you can fix scratches and blemishes with a "Healing Brush" (though it takes more clicks than Picasa's retouch tool), whiten teeth and "Make Dull Skies Blue." But most of them are confined to a separate Editor Workspace that took almost a minute to launch on a new Windows Vista laptop and owed far too much to Adobe's pro-level Photoshop, with its intimidating profusion of toolbars. Even the name is wrong: "Editor Workspace" sounds like something the IT department loaded on your desktop at work.

That's not the only case of Elements disregarding common-sense design principles. It abandons consistency to hide some tasks in right-click menus and twice refused to recognize non-Microsoft e-mail programs.

Both Elements and Picasa could learn from each other, and not just in sorting and editing features. Although each program supports "geotagging"—adding geographic coordinates to a picture—both made this an inefficient process. Picasa even required a separate program, Google Earth, for this work. These two programs also need to improve their offline sharing options: DVDs they produced only worked in Windows PCs, not Macs—let alone regular DVD players.

Their next versions (plus, whenever it ships, the next iPhoto) could constitute a major upgrade if their developers borrow creatively. We'll just have to wait to see how that picture develops.

HELP FILE

By ROB PEGORARO
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

Q. I got a USB drive with U3 software that I don't use, but I can't figure out how to remove it.

A. U3 "smart" drives, which debuted in 2005 from SanDisk and other vendors, can store not just data but Windows programs. That can be handy for users who want to run one program on many PCs, or for those who can't install extra software on a computer at work.

But if you don't run Windows or otherwise didn't ask for that feature—say when companies hand out U3 drives as promotional goodies—this proprietary U3 setup can get in the way. Plus, you don't need U3 to take programs with you; see portableapps.com for applications that run on any flash drive.

The usual disk-management tools in Windows or Mac OS X can't convert a U3 drive to normal flash storage, but that drive should include an uninstall option. Click the U3 button at the right end of the taskbar to open the U3 Launchpad program, click its Settings link, choose U3 Launchpad Settings and select the Uninstall heading. Then click the Uninstall U3 Launchpad button to remove U3 and reformat the drive.

If that doesn't work, you can download U3-removal programs for Windows and Mac OS X from u3.com/support/ (go to the third topic there, "How do I uninstall U3 from my flash drive?").

■ ■ ■

Q. Adobe Reader has started acting up on my PC. Do I have any other options for viewing PDFs on the Web?

A. Try the free Foxit Reader 3 (foxitsoftware.com). Unlike older releases, this version, which shipped in November, can run as a plug-in inside Mozilla Firefox. But its installer can be awfully pushy: Choose a custom install to stop it from putting Foxit shortcuts all over Windows, then decline its options to add a Foxit browser toolbar and eBay links.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB 09-006

The Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase, delivery, installation, and assembly of **Laptop and Desktop Computer Systems & Accessories and others for Marianas High School (MHS).** Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 09-006" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office, no later than **February 04, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 09-006" CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (one (1)-original and three (3)-copies). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: ***babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp.***

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
State Board of Education
Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

Invitation For Bid
IFB 09-007

The Public School System is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase, delivery, installation, and assembly of **Laptop Computer Systems and Accessories for William S. Reyes Elementary School (WSRES).** Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 09-007" containing one (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office, no later than **February 11, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.** Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 09-007" CONFIDENTIAL – Responsibility Determination" (one (1)-original and three (3)-copies). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Juan D. Babauta, Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: ***babautajd@pss.cnmi.mp.***

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/S/ Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Education

/S/ Juan D. Babauta
Acting, Procurement & Supply Officer

Life & Style

She's 114, but who's counting?

By ESMERALDA BERMUDEZ
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—Gertrude Baines, looking cozy wrapped in a bundle of blankets, sits in her wheelchair facing cameras and television reporters. One crouches near the floor by her cotton booties, another shoots questions from above, his microphone not far from her cinnamon-brown lips.

"How does it feel to be 114?" they ask in loud voices so she can hear them.

"What do you eat? What do you like to do? Do you have a favorite president?" Then, the most popular question, and the one Baines dislikes the most: "What's your secret?"

"Why all these questions?" she snaps back curiously. "I want to know."

"Because you're remarkable," one reporter says.

"Because you're No. 1," a nurse chimes in.

Baines turns her eyes, dimmed a cloudy blue by age, toward the tiled floor, unconvinced. The supercentenarian is no stranger to attention, but she is as struck by this latest swirl of interest as people are by her age. The death of 115-year-old Maria de Jesus in Portugal on Jan. 2 made Baines the oldest person on Earth, according to the Gerontology Research Group, which validates claims of extreme old age.

As she slept the day away in her robe, unaware of her distinguished title, a frenzy started to build outside. A dozen reporters rang the Western Convalescent Hospital before 10 a.m. to request interviews. (The director was out so no one was allowed inside.) Headlines splashed Baines' name across the globe and Guinness World Records noted the new titleholder.

It would be a week like no other for Baines and the staff and residents of Western Convalescent. The modest facility has been her home since a broken hip prevented her from living alone with the help of a caretaker at the age of 107.

The interviews, the visitors and the questions became too much after four days, and Baines excused herself from the commotion.

"I just want to go to bed and pull the covers over my head," she says to her nurse.

For a society that relishes first-place, record-breaking, one-of-a-kind feats, Baines' title isn't something she aspired to or even likes talking about much.

Hers is a record achieved simply by being.

Gerontologists are eager to study her genes. Senior citizens at the center long to be like her. "Wonderful, and with hardly any wrinkles," says Azlee Ross, 85.

Chances are 1 in 6 million that any of them will get past 110, let alone live four more years to reach Baines' record. Next in line at the hospital is Ruth Stewart, a 101-year-old retired X-ray technician from Kansas. And next in line for the world title when Baines passes away is another American, 113-year-old Beatrice Farve of Georgia.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Gertrude Baines, 114, poses with her certificates and photos. She talks about Shellman, Ga., her hometown; about her father, an ardent Democrat believed to have been be a slave; about riding to church on Sundays in a horse and buggy.

Her visitors and fellow elders at the center wonder what keeps Baines looking better than some senior citizens two-thirds her age.

The older people are, the more they grapple with aging, said Dr. Thomas T. Perls, head of the New England Supercentenarian Study at Boston University.

"We look at people like Gertrude and have a sense of what it could be like," he said. "You figure they must be doing something right."

Genetics is key, he said, adding that the longest-lived person in history is recorded as Jeanne Calment , a Frenchwoman who lived to 122.

Tuesday, as reporters prepare to leave Baines' room, Cynthia Thompson, her favorite caretaker, leans in to speak to her. "See how much they admire you?" she tells her.

"I hope they satisfied," Baines says, breaking into a smile.

The next morning, an interview with a Chicago radio station is canceled because Baines would rather not talk on the phone.

A visit from CNN is also called off. And plans for a commemorative ceremony requested by Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas are postponed. Baines wants her weekly routine back, starting with 10 a.m. church service. Down the pastel pink halls of the hospital's second floor, where residents live two per room, men and women in wheelchairs have begun to assemble in the dining hall. They sing in soft, melodic voices that rise above the piano.

Thompson slips Baines in as the group hits the chorus of an upbeat song: "I had some pains I just got over. I just got over at last."

The service concludes, and Baines is the first to be wheeled out of the room. She disappears around the corner, just missing a somber scene down the hall where the shrouded body of a man who had just died was being wheeled toward the elevator.

A former maid who was married, divorced, and whose daughter died of typhoid at 18, Baines has outlived all of her relatives. Yet she is often the resident with the most hospital visitors. The walls and door of her room are a shrine of birthday cards, honorary certificates and letters from the mayor, the governor and president. She welcomes church volunteers and relatives of fellow senior citizens to visit her room.

First-timers, especially children, sneak up delicately as they would to a wounded bird, hoping to steal a glimpse.

"They expect to find a shriveled up old lady sleeping in her bed," Thompson said. "But that's not Ms. Baines."

The lady of Room 239-A will lift her head off her black ballerina pillow and say, "Young man, what are you doing? What do you want? Come in."

As the number of centenarians has increased in the last decade, those like Baines have offered different reasons for their longevity. A 115-year-old woman in Indiana recommended more education; a 112-year-old in Australia said living a comfortable life with servants helped; in Nebraska, a 110-year-old always stayed busy; and in Missouri, a 110-year jokingly credited men and chocolate.

Baines is more frank. She has no secret. She refers people to God, saying simply, "Ask him."

After the service, Baines is parked outside her room by a staff member to wait for Thompson, who is on a break. For almost a decade, the cheerful assistant nurse who could be her great-great-granddaughter is the only person Baines has allowed inside her world. On Thompson's days off, Baines refuses to get out of bed.

Thompson changes her robes, tucks her hair under one of her many hats and wheels her to lunch in the dining room. She leaves Baines to wash her own face and rub a pinch of Vaseline over her cheeks, her one beauty routine. Most important, the caretaker never pries.

Baines, in return, opens up. She tells Thompson she's not afraid to die, but she is afraid to be alone. She talks about Shellman, Ga., her hometown; about her father, an ardent Democrat believed to have been a slave; about riding to church on Sundays in a horse and buggy. Now and then, her eyes well up as she talks about photographs and belongings left behind in storage. And when Thompson gains a few pounds, Baines seizes the chance to tease her.

"She's a blessing," Thompson says. "It's an honor that she trusts me."

Earlier this year, when a television camera crew filled her room, she joked with Thompson:

"You stick with me. I'll take you all the way to Hollywood."

Midweek, as reporters continue to call the hospital, Thompson returns to Baines' room to prepare her for lunch. The two women expect things to quiet down now at the hospital. And that is just fine.

Because busy days are bound to come again. Three months from now, it will be time to celebrate her 115th birthday.

BEST SELLERS

(c) 2009 Los Angeles Times

NONFICTION

Outliers, by Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown: $27.99). An exploration of the background of high achievers.

The Last Lecture, by Randy Pausch with Jeffrey Zaslow (Hyperion: $21.95). A professor's terminal cancer inspires a call to seize life's moments.

Wishful Drinking, by Carrie Fisher (Simon & Schuster: $21). The actress and writer's humorous confession to alcoholism, drug addiction and mental breakdowns.

Dewey, by Vicki Myron with Bret Witter (Grand Central: $19.99). The effect that a cat named Dewey Readmore Books had on an Iowa library and its patrons.

The Return of Depression Economics, by Paul Krugman (W.W. Norton: $24.95). A look to the past for the causes of the 2008 credit crisis.

Too Fat to Fish, by Artie Lange (Spiegel & Grau: $24.95). The actor, comedian and Howard Stern sidekick shares his life stories.

Goodnight Bush, by Erich Origen and Gan Golan (Little, Brown: $14.99). A parody of the children's classic Goodnight Moon.

American Lion, by Jon Meacham (Random House: $30). Andrew Jackson's path to the White House.

The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne (Beyond Words: $23.95). Life's secrets, distilled.

When You Are Engulfed in Flames, by David Sedaris (Little, Brown: $25.99). Musings on life and smoking.

FICTION

Breaking Dawn, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: $22.99). The final book in the Twilight saga finds Bella choosing immortality.

Eclipse, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: $19.99). Bella must choose between her lover and a friend, between life and death.

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle, by David Wroblewski (Ecco: $25.95). A mute dog breeder is banished by his uncle a la Hamlet.

A Mercy, by Toni Morrison (Knopf: $23.95). A slave girl is sold by her mother in late-1600s America to give her a better life.

The Tales of Beedle the Bard, by J.K. Rowling (Children's High Level Group: $12.99). A collection of five fairy tales inspired by the Harry Potter series.

The Host, by Stephenie Meyer (Little, Brown: $25.99). Aliens take over the minds of humans.

Scarpetta, by Patricia Cornwell (Putnam: $27.95). Forensic pathologist Kay Scarpetta travels to New York to examine a psychiatric patient at Bellevue.

The Hour I First Believed, by Wally Lamb (Harper: $29.95). A couple seek to reconstruct their lives after a tragic school shooting in Colorado.

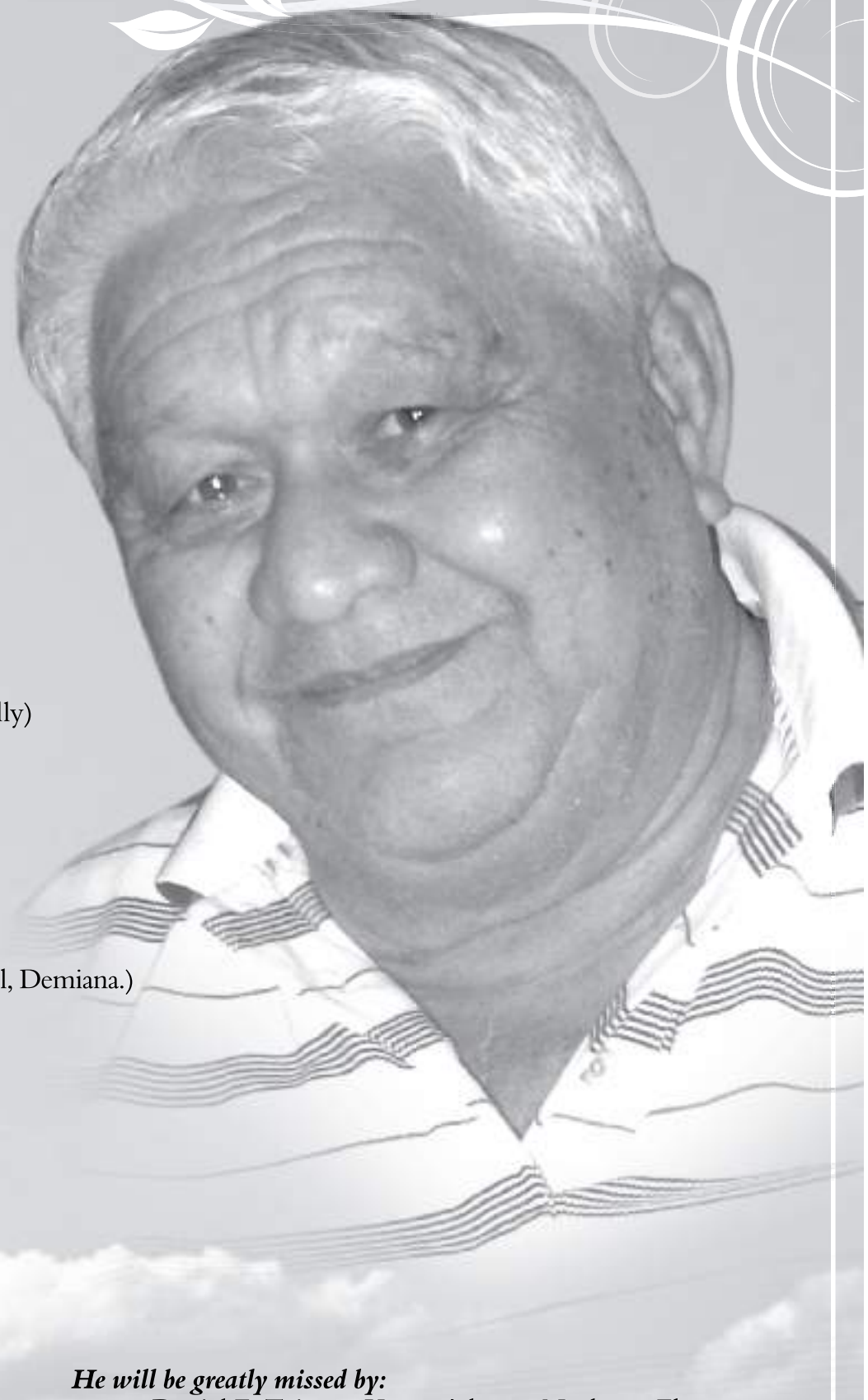
Black Ops, by W.E.B. Griffin (Putnam: $26.95). A task force agent tracks down terrorists who murdered an American diplomat in Buenos Aires.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society, by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows (Dial Press: $22). A writer corresponds with islanders after German occupation.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

VICENTE MUNA MANGLONA

APRIL 19, 1939 | JANUARY 20, 2009



His memory will live forever in the hearts of his:

WIFE: **Rita Aquiningoc Manglona**

CHILDREN (GRANDCHILDREN & GREAT GRANDCHILDREN)

- †George A. & Keiko Y. Manglona (George Jr., Allen, Wendy, Billy)
- Cindy M. & John D. Attao (Geralyn, Jonathan, Lance)
- Norman A. & Katherine D. Manglona (Norman Vincent, Tavia, Storm)
- Charlene M. & Joseph T. Lizama (Ryan {Dre}, Joelene, Ritalene, Jonalene, Joseph Jr.)
- Lisa M. & Francisco S. Dela Cruz (Divana & Ray Salas {Raymana}, Dana, Damien, Deveney)
- †Julian A. & Brenda C. Manglona (Maxine) Mihaina P. Manglona (Monica, Chelsie, Gino, Audrey, Rachel, Demiana.) (Draeshia / Joden)
- Patrick A. & Marie P. Manglona (Seth, Aaron) (Erin Joy / Rita Nicole)
- Lori M. & Joseph K. Mendiola (Frankie)

BROTHERS, SISTERS & IN-LAWS:

- Magdalena M & †Henry V. Hofschneider & Children
- †Jose M. & Emiliana B. Manglona & Children
- †Nicolas M. & Esperanza Manglona & Children
- Herman M. & Lorenza M. Manglona & Children
- Maria M. & Bart Devine & Children
- Tito M. & Anne Sablan & Children
- Joaquin M. & Del C. Manglona & Children
- Thomas M. & Laura I. Manglona & Children
  - Lucas T. Manglona
  - Nancy T. Manglona
  - Norman T. Manglona
  - George T. Manglona
  - Glenn T. Manglona
  - Paul T. Manglona
- †Vicenta A. & †Luis Villagomez & Children
- †Juliana A. & †Tomas Cruz & Children
- †Mariano S.N. Aquiningoc
- †Jose S.N. & Consolacion Aquiningoc & Children
- Apolonia A. & †Jose U. Diaz & Children
- Maria S.N. & William Halin & Children
- †Pacifico S.N. & Rosa P. Aquiningoc & Children

In his new life, he now joins his:

PARENTS: †Lucas Ayuyu & †Concepcion Muna Manglona
PARENTS IN LAW: †Ignacio A. & †Manuela SN. Aquiningoc
CHILDREN: †George Aquiningoc Manglona
†Julian Aquiningoc Manglona

He will be greatly missed by:

Daniel E. Taitano, Venus Adtoon, Norberto Ebuenga, Nancy Ebuenga, Alice Mangornong, Ramat Lila, Vicente (Boyat) Lorenzo, Francisco Macasaro, Susan Castro, Digna Cando, Doi Ligan, Bala, Nellie Ebuenga.

He will also be missed by numerous cousins, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Rosary is being said nightly at Tinian Health Center at 7:45 p.m. Daily Mass of Intentions is being celebrated at San Jose Church, Tinian.

On Wednesday, January 28, 2009, his remains will be escorted from Tinian Health Center at 7:00 a.m. to San Jose Church. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 a.m. Burial will follow at Tinian Cemetery.

Thank You – Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

Rita Aquiningoc Manglona
Children & Families

On sidelines or stage, celebrities out for Obama

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hollywood unbuttoned Washington's collar at President Barack Obama's inauguration events on Tuesday, bringing a touch of levity and star power to a historic day.

Beyonce crooned a classic to the new president, Wyclef Jean got a black-tie crowd to wave their tuxedo jackets in the air and Sheryl Crow sang her famous song celebrating change.

Crow said at the Midwestern Ball that she couldn't remember the last time she played a gig in a dress and heels.

"I'm doing it for the new president. Just my way of serving my country," she said.

Marc Anthony and Jennifer Lopez shook off rumors of trouble in their relationship with a public display of affection at the Western Ball. For his last number, Anthony thrilled the crowd by inviting his wife to sing with him—and got a kiss from her on the lips.

Beyonce sang Etta James' "At Last" at the first ball of the night as part of a star-studded lineup that aired on ABC with Jay-Z, will.i.am, Mariah Carey, Alicia Keys, Shakira, Sting, Faith Hill, Mary J. Blige, Stevie Wonder and Maroon 5.

At the Mid-Atlantic Ball, Jean got many of the 7,000 guests to swing their tux jackets in the air to show their support for Obama as part of a raucous 30-minute set. The crowd also grouped later to music from "The Dead"—the band including members who used to perform with "The Grateful Dead."

Jon Bon Jovi performed at the Commander in Chief Ball for the military, playing an acoustic version of "Who Says You Can't Go Home?"

But it was the Obamas, following Kid Rock and Kanye West, who got the real rock-star reception at the Youth Inaugural Ball. They entered a hotel ballroom to deafening cheers from the mostly 20-something crowd.

Earlier in the day, plenty of the stars showed up for the swearing-in. Jay-Z was there with wife Beyonce. Smokey Robinson, Diddy and Denzel Washington made it, too. Bruce Springsteen was there with his wife, not far from Christopher Guest and Jamie Lee Curtis.

Boxing great Muhammad Ali had a seat on the platform, as did actor John Cusack and director Steven Spielberg. Leonardo DiCaprio whipped out his own camera, while Magic Johnson and actor Val Kilmer patiently posed for photographs with fans.

Stevie Wonder went with his wife, fashion designer Kai Milla, who grew up in Washington.

"There was a connection from one stranger to another stranger at the swearing-in," Milla said. "There's a young energy in the air."

Elsewhere, stars stayed warm at private events like those held by the lobbying firm the BGR Group, which represents the Creative Coalition, an advocacy group for artists.

Among those attending were the actress Susan Sarandon and her director partner, Tim Robbins, and actress Anne Hathaway.

Will these stars stick around for the hard work Obama faces ahead? Crow joked that she had had a sit-down conversation with Obama about being a musician or secretary of state. She said she told him she'd stick with what she does best.

AP

President Barack Obama, left, and first lady Michelle Obama begin their first dance together at the Neighborhood Inaugural Ballin Washington, Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009. At rear is singer Beyonce.

Nearly 38 million people watched inauguration

NEW YORK (AP)—Nearly 38 million Americans watched inauguration coverage of President Barack Obama on Tuesday, the most popular inauguration day on television since Ronald Reagan took office in 1981.

Nielsen Media Research said Reagan's 41.8 million remains the record. Obama more than doubled the 15.5 million viewers who watched George Bush's second inauguration four years ago.

The ratings figure was an average number of people watching at any point from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST. Viewership spiked during the noon hour when Obama was taking the oath of office and delivering his inaugural address.

During the 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. period, NBC captured the largest audience—an estimated 10.4 million viewers, Nielsen said. ABC had 10.1 million and CBS had 7 million. CNN, with 6.9 million, narrowly missed beating CBS during those three hours but did during the 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. period. Fox News Channel had 4.4 million and MSNBC 2.6 million viewers between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Nielsen said

Joint Death Anniversary

Joaquina Pangelinan Reyes
5th year

Charles Pangelinan Reyes
2nd year

Dr. Juan Charforous Reyes
5th year

We, the family of the late Joaquina, Charles Sr., and Juan Reyes, would like to invite our relatives and friends as we reminisce our beloved on their death anniversaries beginning on Sunday, January 18, 2009.

Daily Mass is being offered at San Jose Church at 6:00 a.m. On Monday, January 26, 2009, final Mass will be celebrated at 4:00 p.m. Immediately after Mass, dinner will be serve at the residence of Ms. Cynthia Reyes in Chalan Lau Lau Village.

Your presence and prayers are appreciated.

The Family

FBI didn't keep tabs on comedian Carlin's 7 words

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Talk about irony. George Carlin spent decades pushing the bounds of free speech by saying the seven words you can never say on television, but not one of them made it into an FBI file on him.

Among the 12 pages in a file recently released by Carlin's family are a couple of letters from outraged citizens who complained that the comedian had made fun of the FBI and its director, J. Edgar Hoover, during TV appearances in 1969 and 1970.

There's also a letter from Hoover himself thanking one of Carlin's critics for defending his honor, and an internal FBI memo that quotes the director as asking: "What do we know of Carlin?"

Not much, as it turned out. The memo notes the FBI has "no data concerning Carlin" other than the two letters from his critics.

"Which kind of disappoints me," laughed Carlin's daughter, Kelly Carlin McCall, who provided the file to The Associated Press. "It doesn't really cover any of his more radical 1970s stuff."

Carlin was arrested following a performance in Milwaukee in 1972 for saying the seven words (none of which can be reprinted here).

The following year the Federal Communications Commission reprimanded New York radio station WBAI for airing his "filthy words" routine, triggering a legal battle that resulted in a landmark 1978 Supreme Court ruling upholding the government's right to determine indecency.

Carlin, who died of a heart attack last June at 71, obtained the file years ago through a Freedom of Information Act request, McCall said.

Richard Belzer read from some of it when Carlin was posthumously awarded the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor in a ceremony that will be broadcast on PBS stations Feb. 4.

After Carlin's death, the FBI answered FOIA requests from the AP with a form letter saying the bureau had no file on him. FBI spokeswoman Laura Eimiller said this week she was checking on the contradiction.

The two FBI memos Carlin's daughter provided both stated the bureau's files "contain no information identifiable with Carlin." They also indicate that investigators didn't find the comedian particularly amusing.

One, dated Feb. 12, 1969, refers to Carlin as an "alleged comedian" after he made fun of the bureau during an appearance on "The Jackie Gleason Show."

"His treatment was in very poor taste and it was obvious that he was using the prestige of the bureau and Mr. Hoover to enhance his performance," the memo says.

It also quotes one segment during which Carlin says he is Hoover and is on a stakeout at the attorney general's house. The memo recommends the people who pointed out the performance be sent thank-you letters.

The second memo, dated May 5, 1970, was triggered by a similar complaint, this time for a Carlin appearance on "The Carol Burnett Show."

That time Hoover himself apparently sent the thank-you note, saying: "It's always good to know we have the support of such staunch friends as you."

Myers' 'Love Guru' proves endearing at Razzies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Voters for 2008's worst movies love Mike Myers. They really love him.

Myers' comedy flop "The Love Guru" led the field Wednesday for the Razzies with seven nominations, among them worst picture and worst-acting slots for Myers, Jessica Alba, Verne Troyer and Academy Award winner Ben Kingsley.

The number of nominations for "Love Guru" was appropriate given what a personal project it was for Myers, who not only starred but also co-wrote and produced the movie, said John Wilson, founder of the Razzies, an Oscar spoof that dishes out "dis-honors" for the lousiest stuff Hollywood dredged up the previous year.

"This is one of those auteur-of-the-awful situations," Wilson said. "I think people are tired of him in general. He hasn't really made a good movie in quite some time."

The other worst-picture contenders were "Disaster Movie" and "Meet the Spartans," Hollywood spoofs that shared a nomination for a "badly beaten dead horse of a concept"; the fright flick "The Happening"; Paris Hilton's romantic comedy bomb "The Hottie & the Nottie"; and the sword-and-sorcery fantasy "In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale."

AP

In this file image originally released by Paramount Pictures, Mike Myers is shown in a scene from "The Love Guru."

Razzie "winners" will be announced Feb. 21, the day before the Oscars.

Hilton had three nominations, worst actress and worst screen couple alongside her co-stars in "The Hottie & the Nottie," plus worst supporting actress for "Repo! The Genetic Opera."

Eddie Murphy, named worst actor, supporting actor and supporting actress last year for multiple roles in "Norbit," has two nominations this time, as worst actor and screen couple alongside himself for dual roles in his sci-fi comedy dud "Meet Dave."

Cameron Diaz also picked up two Razzie nominations for the romance "What Happens in Vegas," as worst actress and worst screen couple alongside co-star Ashton Kutcher.

Along with Kingsley, Oscar winner Al Pacino had a worst-actor nomination for his crime thrillers "88 Minutes" and "Righteous Kill."

The stars of the remake "The Women"—Annette Bening, Eva Mendes, Debra Messing, Jada Pinkett Smith and Meg Ryan—shared a worst-actress nomination. Joining them, Alba, Diaz and Hilton in the worst-actress category was Kate Hudson for "Fool's Gold" and "My Best Friend's Girl."

Besides Murphy, Myers and Pacino, worst-actor nominees were Larry the Cable Guy for "Witless Protection" and Mark Wahlberg for "The Happening" and "Max Payne."

"In the Name of the King" filmmaker Uwe Boll had three nominations for 2008 movies, worst director for that flick and "1968: Tunnel Rats" and "Postal," supporting actor for playing himself in "Postal" and screen couple alongside "any actor, camera or screenplay."

Boll—whose movies include such horror or action tales as "Bloodrayne," "Alone in the Dark" and "House of the Dead"—also was selected by Razzies voters to receive a special prize for worst career achievement as "Germany's answer to Ed Wood," the legendary bad filmmaker responsible for "Plan 9 From Outer Space."

"It's pretty insulting to Ed Wood. Although Wood didn't understand how to splice two frames together, there was a joy of incompetence in his work," Wilson said. "Uwe Boll's like our Meryl Streep. As long as he continues to work, he will get nominated, just like Meryl Streep does with those other awards."

Batman & Bollywood? Oscars eye 'Knight,' 'Slumdog'

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—"The Dark Knight" is the box-office behemoth with the deceased acting front-runner whose name everyone knows. "Slumdog Millionaire" is the out-of-nowhere surprise with a cast no one ever heard of before.

Thursday's Academy Awards nominations could set up a duel between those two rarities: One a superhero saga so esteemed that it has lifted the comic-book genre into best-picture territory, the other a tiny tale whose rags-to-riches theme mirrors the film's rise to success.

On the one-year anniversary of Heath Ledger's death, he is expected to earn a supporting-actor nomination for his feverish performance as Batman's arch-enemy, the Joker, in Christopher Nolan's "The Dark Knight."

Ledger has been the solid favorite throughout awards season. The film had been considered a longshot in other top categories, but it has gained momentum for best picture, director and screenplay as it grabbed across-the-board nominations for awards from one Hollywood guild after another.

"Slumdog Millionaire" leaped onto the awards radar as it premiered at film festivals late last summer, while "The Dark Knight" was soaring beyond the half-billion mark at the domestic box office.

Directed by Danny Boyle, "Slumdog Millionaire" became a darling of critics, and the film has climbed to nearly $50 million at the box office playing in narrow release compared to the theater blitz of "The Dark Knight" and other studio blockbusters. It swept its four categories at the Golden Globes, including the prize for best drama.

"The Dark Knight" continues the story Nolan started with "Batman Begins," starring a top-name cast that includes Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Morgan Freeman and Gary Oldman.

"Slumdog Millionaire" features a cast of unknowns in the story of a youth rising to fame and fortune after terrible hardships on the streets of Mumbai, the heart of India's Bollywood film industry.

Other best-picture contenders could include two films about fallen political figures: the Richard Nixon drama "Frost/Nixon" and the Harvey Milk tale "Milk." Also in the running are the Roman Catholic drama "Doubt," the marital tragedy "Revolutionary Road" and the romantic fantasy "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button."

Frank Langella as Nixon in "Frost/Nixon" and Sean Penn as the slain gay-rights pioneer in "Milk" are likely best-actor nominees.

Kate Winslet has a shot at two nominations, best actress for "Revolutionary Road" and supporting actress for the Holocaust-themed drama "The Reader." Winslet won both prizes at the Golden Globes.

Among other acting prospects are Winslet's "Titanic" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio for "Revolutionary Road," Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett for "Benjamin Button," Anne Hathaway for the family drama "Rachel Getting Married" and Meryl Streep, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Amy Adams for "Doubt."

The Oscars also might offer a classic Hollywood comeback story. A pariah for years because of bad-boy behavior that wrecked his career, Mickey Rourke has returned to grace with the sports drama "The Wrestler," which earned him the Globe for best dramatic actor.

Oscar nominees are chosen in most categories by specific branches of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, such as actors, directors and writers. The academy's full membership of about 6,000 was eligible to vote for best-picture nominations and can cast ballots for the winners in all categories at the Oscar ceremony itself.

The 81st Oscars will be presented Feb. 22 in a ceremony airing on ABC from Hollywood's Kodak Theatre.

This year's Oscars already present a departure from previous shows. Rather than a comedian, such as past hosts Billy Crystal, Chris Rock or Jon Stewart, the emcee this time is Hugh Jackman, star of the "X-Men" flicks and a Tony Award winner for best actor in a musical.

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Underworld 3: Rise of the Lycans

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:40
Saturday	1:15	4:10	7:10	9:40
Sunday	1:15	4:10	7:10	
Mon and Tues		4:10	7:10	

Michael Sheen, Bill Nighy
Thriller, Romance • Rated R

Synopsis

Depicts the origins of the centuries-long blood feud between two powerful and immortal tribes, the aristocratic Vampires, known as Death Dealers, and the barbaric Lycans, a line of fierce werewolves.

Inkheart

Friday		4:05	7:25	9:45
Saturday	1:20	4:05	7:25	9:45
Sunday	1:20	4:05	7:25	
Mon and Tues		4:05	7:25	

Brendan Fraser, Helen Mirren
Adventure, Fantasy • Rated PG

Synopsis

Mortimer "Mo" Folchart and his 12-year-old daughter, Meggie, share a passion for books. What they also share is an extraordinary gift for bringing characters from books to life when they read aloud. But there is a danger: when a character is brought to life from a book, a real person disappears into its pages. On one of their trips to a secondhand book shop, Mo hears voices he hasn't heard for years, and when he locates the book they're coming from, it sends a shiver up his spine.

★ ★ ★

Paul Blart, Mall Cop

Friday		4:20	7:05	10:00
Saturday	1:05	4:20	7:05	10:00
Sunday	1:05	4:20	7:05	
Mon and Tues		4:20	7:05	

Kevin James, Jayma Mays
Comedy • Rated PG

Synopsis

A single, suburban dad tries to make ends meet as a security officer at a New Jersey mall. It's a job he takes very seriously, though no one else does. When Santa's helpers at the mall stage a coup, shutting down the megaplex and taking hostages (Paul's daughter and sweetheart among them), Jersey's most formidable mall cop will have to become a real cop to save the day.

My Bloody Valentine

Friday		4:30	7:15	9:55
Saturday	1:25	4:30	7:15	9:55
Sunday	1:25	4:30	7:15	
Mon and Tues		4:30	7:15	

Jaime King, Tom Atkins
Horror • Rated R

Hotel For Dogs

Friday		4:00	7:00	9:35
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	9:35
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Mon and Tues		4:00	7:00	

Emma Roberts, Don Cheadle
Comedy, Children • Rated PG

Bride Wars

Friday		4:15	7:30	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:15	7:30	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:15	7:30	
Mon and Tues		4:15	7:30	

Kate Hudson, Anne Hathaway
Romantic Comedy • Rated PG

Unborn

Friday		4:25	7:20	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:25	7:20	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:25	7:20	
Mon and Tues		4:25	7:20	

Gary Oldman, Odette Yustman
Thriller, Supernatural • Rated PG 13

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Heartbroken mom wants more than sex with kids' father

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My heart is broken. I don't know how to fix it, and sometimes I want to kill myself. I'm in love with my children's father and he knows it. "Brad" comes over to have sex with me, but we're not together. He tells me he's single, but I know he's with someone else. I want him to be honest—give me that much respect—because I have two kids by him.

Brad is the only person I'm having sex with. I told him I'm getting too old to play games. I'm trying to get on with my life, but still we have sex.

When do I say enough is enough? I tell Brad I need to drop the kids off, and he tells me no. But I need some alone time, too. If I had known our relationship would turn out like this, I would never have gotten involved with him. I love him with all my heart. Please tell me what to do.

HEARTSICK IN KANSAS

DEAR HEARTSICK: For the sake of your mental health and for your children's future, wake up and realize that you are not "in love" with Brad. You're in love with the fantasy of who you would LIKE him to be.

The person you have described is immature, a liar and so selfish he doesn't care who is hurt by his behavior -- not you and not his children. He will never change. Allowing this man in your life is fruitless, and you will not become stronger until you finally accept that fact.

If you haven't already done so, contact the social services department in your state to ensure that Brad contributes something to the children's care. If you need alone time, trade favors with another single mother or a trusted friend or family member. But please, do not continue on the path you're on because it's leading you nowhere.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I work in an office where there are more men than women. We all share one bathroom. Fairness would dictate that the toilet seat be left up, as more males will need it that way; however, I can't escape the feeling that the seat's natural position is down. Do you know what is proper?

JUST WONDERING

DEAR JUST WONDERING: I'm glad you asked. According to Emily Post, "In a unisex restroom, don't leave the toilet seat up."

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Help me decide—should I stay or should I go? My companion, "Ted," and I have known each other for more than two years and have lived together for a year. We have a good relationship and enjoy many of the same things. He pays all the bills, and if we go anywhere, he pays for our trip.

Friends keep asking when Ted and I are going to get married. He is 78 and I am 61. I would like to be married, but Ted says "never," he's "too old to get married."

He was married to his late wife for 45 years. I have been married three times. My last two husbands died, so I understand loss. Ted says he now wants only a girlfriend.

Our family members get along well. One of his children even asked me when we're tying the knot. Abby, is there really an age when it's too old to marry?

YOUNG AT HEART IN FLORIDA

DEAR YOUNG AT HEART: No, couples older than you and Ted have married. What your companion is telling you is that HE doesn't want to make that kind of commitment again. If a live-in relationship with Ted is something you enjoy and his paying the travel expenses is enough, then stay. However, if a lifetime commitment is what you're really looking for, then you'll have to look elsewhere.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Akon claims he doesn't know his true age

ATLANTA (AP)—Even though Akon has a birth certificate, he says his age is still a mystery—and he'd rather keep it that way. "All it's going to do is depress me," he told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "I don't want to know I'm getting older. Then I'll start to think about getting checkups and insurance. I don't want that."

Numerous reports have put his age between 25 to 35 years old. In 2006, he gave his age as 25. But now, he claims his birth certificate shows he was born on April 16, 1977, which would make him 31.

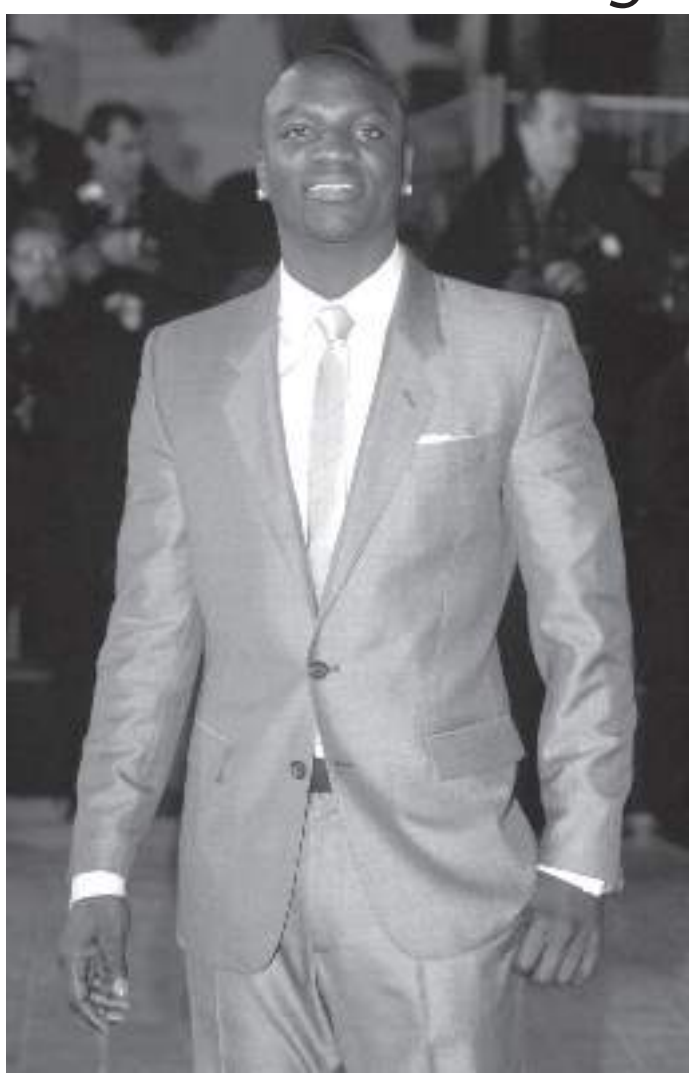
Some have accused Akon of trying to push back his age. But the singer, who was born in the United States but spent his early life in Senegal, where his family is from, says he never knew it.

"In Africa ... age is not important over there. They don't care. People only focus on it here (America) and in Europe."

Akon says when people ask, he just gives him a figure that comes to mind.

"I feel like I'm 21 right now," he says. "And I'll be 21 for the next 10 years."

Akon went multiplatinum with his 2006 CD "Konvicted," which included hits such as "Smack That" with Eminem and "Don't Matter." His most recent album, "Freedom," was released in December.



AP

In this Jan. 17, 2009 file photo, Senegalese-American singer Akon arrives at the Cannes festival palace, to take part in the NRJ awards ceremony in Cannes, southern France.

Sex toys CEO getting reality show on TLC

CINCINNATI (AP)—A woman whose company sells sex toys through home parties will star in her own reality TV show.

Cable television's TLC says "Mother Knows Sex" chronicles the struggles faced by Patty Brisben and her family as she runs her business.

Brisben founded Pure Romance in 1993; the company's Web site says it has grown into a multimillion-dollar business with 80 full-time employees. Pure Romance relies on a sales force of independent consultants who organize in-home parties where the products are sold.

TLC plans to broadcast the one-hour program at 10 p.m. on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 1. It will be repeated three times in early February.

Peter Falk's wife opposes conservatorship

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Peter Falk's wife of 32 years is opposing a bid by the Emmy-winning actor's daughter to place him under a conservatorship, court documents show.

Falk

Falk entrusted his wife, Shera Falk, to manage his affairs and care before his health deteriorated, according to documents filed Tuesday in Los Angeles Superior Court. Catherine Falk applied to be named conservator over her father's affairs in December, stating that he was suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

The former "Columbo" star's wife contends that Falk is receiving adequate care and does not have a close relationship with his daughter. Her filing includes declarations from the couple's accountant, housekeeper and numerous friends, including an ex-wife of Johnny Carson and actor Joe Mantegna.

Shera Falk's filing does not address whether her husband has Alzheimer's and does not include a declaration from Falk's doctors. But the filing does dispute three "factual inaccuracies" in Catherine Falk's petition; the Alzheimer's claim is not among them.

The filing also says the actor is cared for around-the-clock by a nursing staff in a guest house at their Beverly Hills home, which was converted into an art studio and was easier for Falk to navigate after undergoing hip surgery in June.

A hearing on whether the conservatorship is necessary is scheduled for next week.

Falk won four Emmys for his starring role in "Columbo." He also received Academy Award nominations for movie roles in 1959 and 1960.

Dillon pleads not guilty to speeding in Vermont

CHELSEA, Vt. (AP)—Matt Dillon pleaded not guilty Wednesday to a Dec. 30 speeding charge in which police say they spotted the actor doing 106 miles per hour on an interstate highway. Dillon's lawyer, Mark Kaplan of Burlington, entered the plea on behalf of the 44-year-old actor. Kaplan said there was no reason for Dillon to attend the arraignment, and he hoped to resolve the case without going to trial.

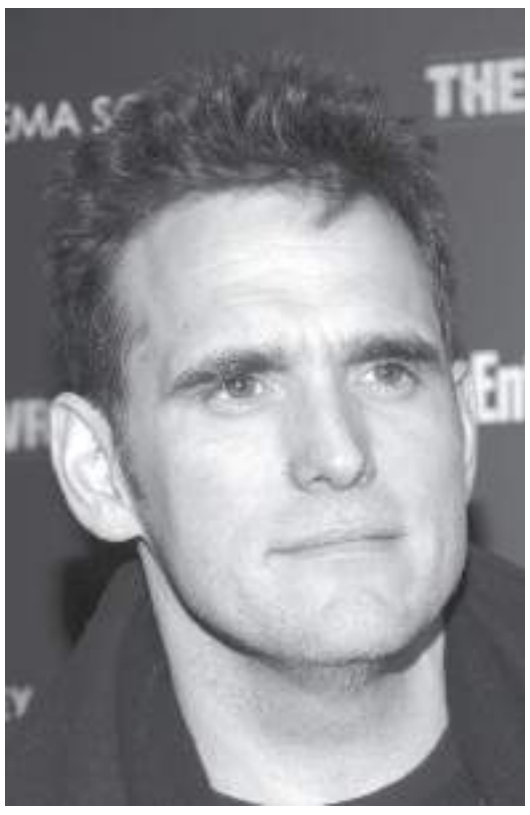
"He lives in New York. As you can see from today's proceedings it's a 2-minute deal, so it's really not worth the trip for him to come up here when I can take care of it," Kaplan said after the hearing.

In an affidavit filed with the Vermont District Court in Chelsea, a state trooper said Dillon was apologetic and cooperative.

"I screwed up, I know, I know," the affidavit quoted Dillon as saying as a trooper approached his car.

Because Dillon was allegedly traveling more than 30 mph over the posted 65-mph speed limit on the interstate, he was charged with criminal negligent operation. The charge is a misdemeanor that carries a maximum sentence of a year in jail and a $1,000 fine.

Dillon, whose screen credits include "Crash" and "There's Something About Mary," told police he was rushing to meet a friend in the town of Barton.



AP

In this Dec. 8, 2008, file photo, actor Matt Dillon attends a screening of "The Wrestler" in New York.

Jazz musician David Newman dies at 75

KINGSTON, N.Y. (AP)—David "Fathead" Newman, a jazz musician who played with the Ray Charles Band and won fame as a tenor sax soloist, has died at age 75.

Manager Karen Nemman says the jazz musician died Tuesday of pancreatic cancer in a Kingston, N.Y., hospital.

The Dallas native left college to tour with Charlie Parker's mentor, Buster Smith.

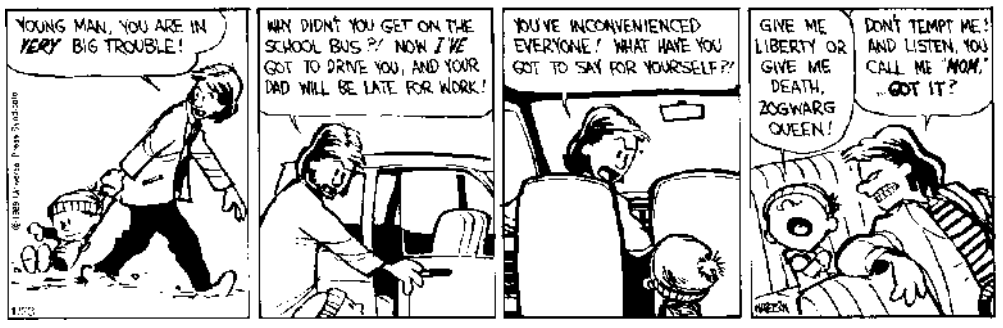
According to his Web site, Newman spent 12 years with the Ray Charles Band beginning in 1954. He began as the baritone sax player and became the star tenor sax soloist.

He returned to Dallas and led his own bands before moving to New York City. As a studio musician, he worked with musicians including Herbie Mann, Aretha Franklin and Aaron Neville.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

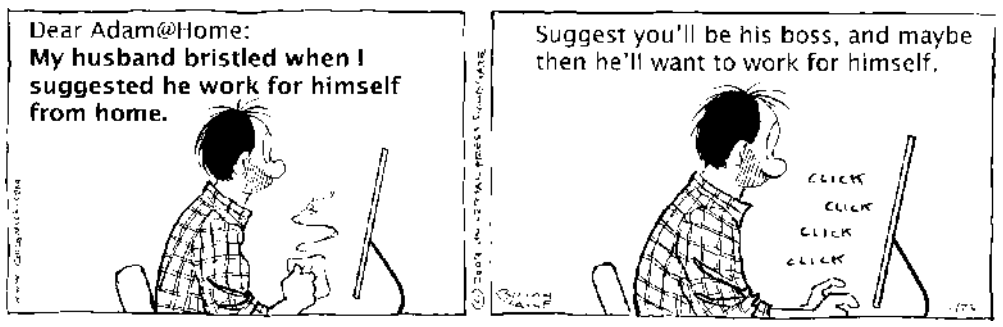

YOUNG MAN, YOU ARE IN VERY BIG TROUBLE!
WHY DIDN'T YOU GET ON THE SCHOOL BUS?! NOW I'VE GOT TO DRIVE YOU, AND YOUR DAD WILL BE LATE FOR WORK!
YOU'VE INCONVENIENCED EVERYONE! WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?!
GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH, ZOGWARG QUEEN!
DON'T TEMPT ME! AND LISTEN, YOU CALL ME "MOM," ...GOT IT?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

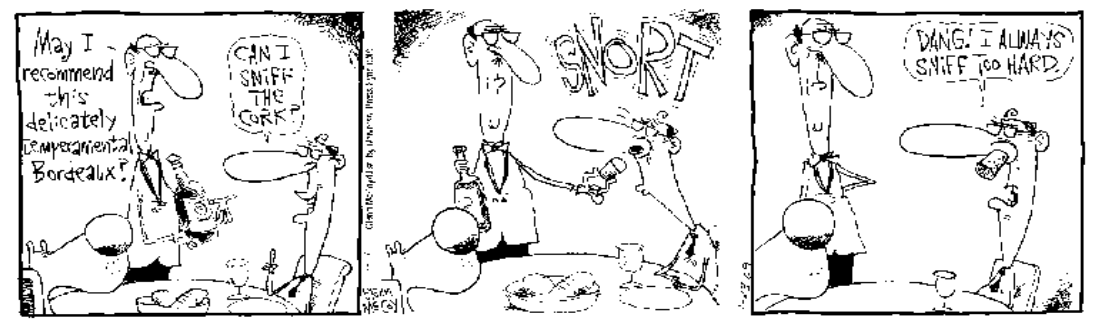
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


Dear Adam@Home:
My husband bristled when I suggested he work for himself from home.
Suggest you'll be his boss, and maybe then he'll want to work for himself.
CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

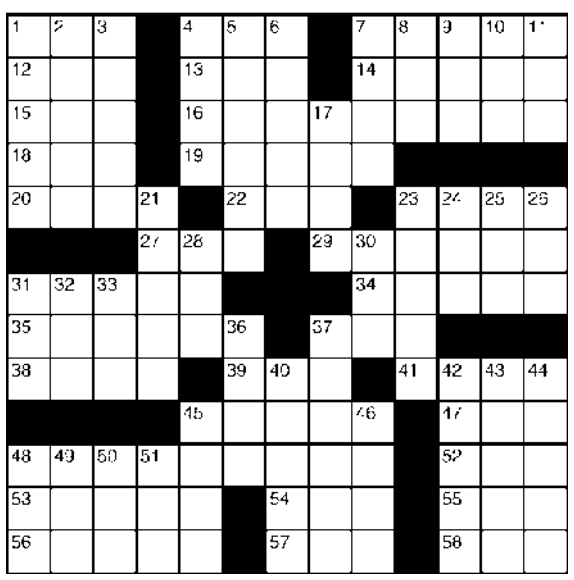
ACROSS
1 Hot tub
4 Chances, for short
7 Blubbers
12 Dress (up)
13 Dance flourish
14 Say one's piece
15 Lord's Prayer start
16 Noted news-weekly, with "The"
18 Lemieux milieu
19 Toaster's word
20 Masticate
22 Screw up
23 Test the waters
27 Choose
29 December stone
31 Point of view
34 Dastardly one
35 Chat
37 Fool
38 Authentic
39 Every iota
41 Drink too much
45 Thwart
47 Upper limit
48 1969 Fellini movie
52 Greek vowel
53 Bewildered
54 Rd.
55 Solidify
56 Energetic
57 Wrangler rival
58 Skill

DOWN
1 Unemotional
2 Joey's place?
3 Match
4 Wordsworth works
5 Type of fence
6 Animal track
7 "Groovy"
8 Spinning meas.
9 Midafternoon, on a sundial
10 Em halves
11 Collection
17 Bygone game-show host Jack
21 "The Right Stuff" author
23 Watch this space?
24 Expert
25 "SNL" announcer Pardo
26 Remnant
28 Shell game item
30 Conditions
31 Performance
32 Neither mate
33 Wildebeest
36 Indonesian island
37 Niche
40 Lifelong resident
42 Alpha's antithesis
43 Dad, in Devonshire
44 Put on a pedestal
45 Talk like 37-Across?
46 Banjo supporter
48 Chuck e-head
49 Foolhardiness personified
50 1/6 fl. oz.
51 "Uh-huh"

Solution time: 25 mins.

Y	A	O	■	A	G	F	S	■	F	L	A	P
E	M	U	■	N	I	C	E	■	L	I	N	E
S	I	T	T	I	G	H	T	■	A	M	F	N
■	■	R	U	M	■	O	U	R	T	O	W	N
I	R	I	B	A	L	■	P	I	C	■	■	■
B	L	G	■	I	I	■	V	A	M	P	S	■
A	S	H	Y	■	P	O	I	■	F	I	C	T
R	F	T	I	F	■	O	I	D	■	D	N	A
■	■	■	D	A	M	■	K	E	N	E	R	■
I	C	E	D	T	E	A	■	A	L	I	■	■
M	A	G	I	■	T	W	I	L	I	G	H	T
A	M	O	S	■	R	A	R	E	■	H	C	I
M	F	S	H	■	O	Y	F	R	■	T	F	X

Yesterday's answer 1-23



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Tiffani-Amber Thiessen, 35; Mariska Hargitay, 45; Gail O'Grady, 46; Richard Dean Anderson, 59

Happy Birthday: This is your year to make strides and put the past behind you. Progressive action will impress the people who have watched you slip and slide over the years, and you'll receive greater respect and the anticipation of good things to come. Don't look back. Your numbers are 4, 12, 17, 20, 21, 39, 46

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't take chances in any aspect of your life. Saying something you'll regret or making a snap decision will both lead to problems. Take a look at what you can reform in your life. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You can go after advancement and challenge anyone who stands in your way but don't take on too much or make promises you can't deliver. Someone in the background is watching and will step up to help if needed. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A trip will pay off in experience and learning. This is an ideal time to reassess your lifestyle. Don't let anyone drop responsibilities in your lap that don't belong to you. Sometimes saying no works best. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You can't slow down or stop now when it comes to your future. Personally and professionally there are decisions to make. A change at home will be worth its weight in gold, so don't scrimp when the outcome will be so beneficial. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): A little forethought will give you the edge when dealing with people who can help you. A trip can lead to closing a deal. Don't let a relationship with someone you work with take priority over a decision you must make. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): You can talk and network your way to the top. You will make an impact on the people you approach and will be inspired by the response you get. Don't hold back when you have so much to gain from promoting and presenting. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Look at both sides of every issue that arises before making a decision or taking sides. Not everything will be as you think. Before you get involved or move ahead, observe and evaluate the long-term effect. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Play to win. Not everyone will be fair but, as long as you are prepared, you will outmaneuver whoever steps in front of you. Love is in the stars—and you can make a difference to someone who has been there for you in the past. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't let anyone fool you into thinking that he or she is going to do you a favor. Do your own work and solve your own problems. A demand may lead to unwanted change but, in the end, you will benefit. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't be afraid to show a little emotion. You have as much right as anyone to get caught up in a moment of joy. A romantic encounter will lead to so much more if you follow through. A decision made now will alter your future. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): It's time to get rid of old debts whether they are financial, emotional or physical. Don't be afraid to admit you have made mistakes—you can clear a path that will lead to a brighter future. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't let greed get in the way of doing the right thing. Go through the proper channels and avoid trouble later on. A personal deal will influence a business deal, so consider all areas of your life before making a final decision. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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Birthday Baby: You are bighearted, outspoken and intellectually engaging. You are adaptable, passionate and a believer in fair play.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1				4				
	4	7	9		6			
	2				8			
	5					6	2	
8				6				3
	7	9					8	
			7				3	
			4		9	7	1	
				2				8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/23

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	4	1	6	8	2	7	9	3
6	9	3	4	5	7	8	2	1
2	8	7	1	9	3	5	4	6
3	1	9	2	4	8	6	7	5
4	5	6	7	1	9	3	8	2
7	2	8	3	6	5	9	1	4
1	3	2	9	7	6	4	5	8
8	7	4	5	3	1	2	6	9
9	6	5	8	2	4	1	3	7

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. First, them out. CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ACTUARIES — Solution: 8 letters

T	X	Q	U	O	T	E	C	N	A	N	I	F	C	L
Γ	Γ	R	G	Γ	D	O	T	S	A	P	S	Γ	A	O
C	D	E	S	K	I	L	L	I	D	T	S	I	L	S
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A	Ⓣ	N	U	O	C	U	E	O	D	N	E	L	A	O
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Basis, Ca , Catalog, Chart, Copy, Costs, Count, Data, Degree, Draw, Evaluate, Facts, Finance, Future, Gains, Gauge, Graphs, Grow, Guess, Health, Index, Jobs, Late, Lend, Liability, List, Loss, Medical, Money, Numbers, Office, Parameters, Past, Policy, Quote, Rate, Ratio, Report, Risk, Schooling, Skill, Span, Spreadsheet, Standard, Sums, Support, Tables, Technical, Trend

Yesterday's Answer: Students

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Computer Repair
Only $25 Minor Problem
WE ALSO FIX LAPTOP & USED PARTS
233-5641 Open 7 Day a Week 9:00 AM-9:00 PM

LOST PASSPORT

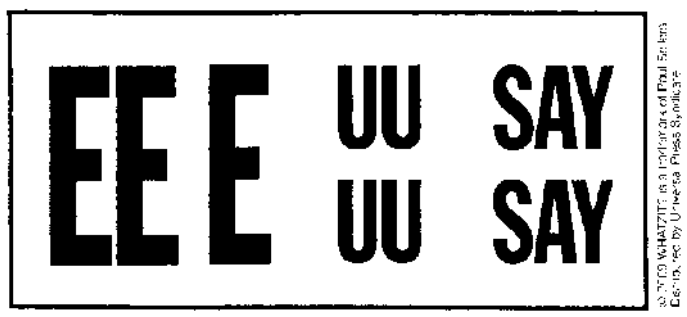
Name : Qian Taiguo
D.O.B : May 3, 1967
Passport No. : G10606328
Contact No. : 483-8085

2004 FORD CROWN VICTORIA
#: 25137 MILES, AUTO TRANS
EXCELLENT CONDITION
INTERIOR SMOOTH LEATHER
W/ CD PLAYER: POWER WINDOW
$8,900 OR BEST OFFER
TEL #: 898-3367/285-6374

WINSOCK POWER
Chainsaw • Brush Cutter
Lawn Mower
Generator • Engine Repair
Parts sales service for all makes:
234-6001 Middle Road

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



Find today's solution in this section

NMTI NEEDS INSTRUCTORS!

The Northern Marianas Trades Institute is in need of instructors to teach in their various trades programs. If you have a daytime job, teaching will not interfere as most classes are taught at night.

Good part-time work teaching students trades skill, good retired or active welcomed. Your skills are needed.

For details, please call the school at 235-6684 and ask for Rose, Vic or Tony.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

New Full Concrete House for Rent, Ahgaga Rd., Papago. $550 OBO. 2BR, 2BTH, kitchen, din, liv rm. 3 car parking, ref, oven, water tank, oceanview, pvd. prking, safe&quiet. 256-0132 or 483-1933.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, FF, AC, 24-hr pwr./water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. MIHA applicants accepted. Right behind NMC campus. Special rates for NMC faculty/students. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

House for rent: 2&3 bedroom house w/ 2 bathroom w/ swimming pool, nice view of Managaha, in Capitol Hill. Call 322-5717.

Make it a daily habit!
Log on to www.saipantribune.com

EMPLOYMENT

Sablan Enterprises, Inc. is looking for a MASON. Interested applicant may apply at 2nd Floor, VSS Plaza, Chalan Piao, Saipan, MP 96950

Seeking experienced autobody repairer. Must be experienced with rust repairs, some paint experienced preferred. Contact 287-7785

SERVICE

Xing Hua Auto Service Center. Professional parch lacquer room for rent. Handle all autos parts. Tel.:288-1886

WHATZIT Solution:
Easy for you to say

HOUSE FOR RENT
3 bedroom, 1 bathroom house centrally located in Garapan, equipped with a water tank, air conditioners in every room, nice, safe, and friendly neighborhood. NMHC applicants welcome.
Please call 483-3848 for more information.

SHAKIR'S REALTY & INSURANCE
1ST FLOOR, SUITE 103 SHAKIR BLDG II, BEACH RD., CHALAN KANOA, SAIPAN.
TEL. 234-5152 • 287-2254
(WE BUY, SELL, LEASE, RENT PROPERTIES)

RENTALS
3br, 2bth house, Capital Hill... $900/mo.
4br, 2bth house, Tototville.... $950/mo.
4br, 3bth house, Gualo Rai.... $900/mo.
3br, 2bth house, Garapan..... $950/mo.

APARTMENTS
2br, 1bth furnished, Beach Rd. CK w/ WiFi . $400/mo.
Spacious studio furnished, Gualo Rai w/ WiFi . $300/mo.
2br, 1bth furnished, CK..... $350/mo.
2br, 1bth furnished, Dandan... $350/mo.
1br, 1bth furnished, Susupe... $275/mo.
2br, 1bth w/ swimming pool... $750/mo.
Back-up generator

SALE & LEASE
4br, 2bth house, Dandan, oceanview..... $210K
5br, 4bth house, Dandan, oceanview..... $250K
4br, 3bth house, Dandan, newly renovated .. $140K
4br, 2bth house + 2unit 2br apt. As Terlaje .. $160K
3br, 1bth house, Gualo Rai, oceanview..... $110K
Executive 5br, 3bth house, w/ swimming pool, Papago. Must see to appreciate..... $320K
5br, 3bth house, Kobler with fence..... $165K

LAND
We have beach & oceanview properties available

CALL OR VISIT US FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS.

Northern Mariana Islands RETIREMENT FUND

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
JVA# 09-011

OPENING DATE: **January 23, 2009** CLOSING DATE: **UNTIL FILLED**

The NMI Retirement Fund is seeking professionals to work in a busy and challenging office. Salary and benefits are commensurate with the responsibilities assigned to the successful candidates and in compliance with CNMI laws. The following positions are available:

	Starting Salary Range
Executive Secretary	$21,506.41 – $36,763.20 (Pay Level 29)
Internal Auditors (2)	$24,889.35 – $42,558.00 (Pay Level 32)

Interested individuals may pick up an application and the complete Position Description from the NMI Retirement Fund, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or may request a packet by e-mail from the Administrator. Application packages may be hand-delivered or sent by e-mail or postal mail. Packages must be marked **"JVA# 09-011 Confidential."** Interested applicants must submit their **application, resume, educational credentials and police clearance** addressed to the following:

Mark Aguon, Administrator
NMI Retirement Fund
P.O. Box 501247
Saipan, MP 96950-1247
E-mail: administrator01@nmiretirement.com

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (1-670) 664-3500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@saipan.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Opening date: December 26, 2008 Closing date: January 30, 2009

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancy for Saipan:

One (1) Comptroller

Detailed information on minimum qualifications and position description for the above position may be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor Arrival Building) or the Human Resources Office (2nd floor Departure Building) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or it may also be downloaded by visiting CPA's website at ***www.cpa.gov.mp***

All applications must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 26 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Selected applicant will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. The deadline for submission of applications is no later than ***4:30 p.m., January 30, 2009.***

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

/s/ EFRAIN F. CAMACHO, P.E.
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
OFFICE OF PERSONNET MANAGEMENT
P.O. Box 5153 CHRB, SAIPAN. MP 96950 -5153
TEL. NOS.: (670) 234-6925 /6958/8036
Fax no.: (670) 234-1013

EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO: 08-087
OPENING DATE: 01/16/09
CLOSING DATE: 01/30/09

REANNOUNCEMENT

This examination is for the purpose of developing an Open Competitive and Promotional Eligible list. It is the policy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that the personnel system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

POSITION AND SALARY: **Program Analyst** **PL - UNGRADED**
$1,461.54 B/W - $38,000.00 P/A

The salary given will be determined by the qualification of the appointee.

LOCATION: **Office of the Governor, Saipan**
CIP Program Office

DUTIES:
Provides administrative support to the CIP Administrator and the Contracting Officer. Provides support, coordination and administration of the Covenant section 702 Capital Improvement Program funding. Develops and monitors the program's project budgets. Assists the CIP Administrator in preparation of project drawdowns. Assists the CIP Administrator in preparation of the semi-annual reports (SF269/272). Assists the CIP Administrator in the audit review process. Monitors various project activities and transactions according to the applicable Federal Grant Agreements, local procurement rules and regulations and Appropriation Acts. Assumes project responsibility for administering the activities and operations for all CIP contracts. Possesses the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing. Possesses the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with grantor agencies, other departments, agencies, elected, and appointed officials and the general public. Maintains and organizes project files on a daily basis. Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:
Any combination equivalent to graduation from college or university with an Associate's Degree in accounting, business-related fields such as administration, management or finance; or any equivalent combination of training, experience and additional education that provides the necessary knowledge, abilities and skills. A minimum of eight (8) years of general experience in program administration. Copy of degree/official transcript and police clearance must be attached to the application.

CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:
This position is **"COVERED"** Is eligible to receive overtime payment for overtime hours performed pursuant to Part IV.B16 of the Personnel Service System Rules and Regulation (PSSR/R), Part I.7C of the Excepted Service Regulation (ESR) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

NOTE: Education and training claimed under item 25(A) through (F) of the Application for Employment must be substantiated by an official school transcript, diploma or certificate. FAILURB TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATTON.

INTERESTED PERSONS SHOULD SEND THEIR CURRENT APPLICATION FORMS TO:

Office of Personnel Management
J.M. Building, Garapan
Saipan, MP 96950

Office of Personnel Management
San Jose Village
Tinian, MP 96952

Office of Personnel Management
Songsong Village
Rota, MP 96951

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
PA/HMGP/CIP PROGRAM – OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel.: (670) 664-2371 • Fax: (670) 664-2408

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-GOV-037

Roof Repair of Department of Finance Buildings
(Office of the Secretary of Finance, Finance & Accounting and Treasury Buildings)

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, are soliciting sealed bids for the Roof Repair of three (3) Department of Finance Buildings, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

1. Office of the Secretary of Finance Building
2. Treasury Building
3. Finance and Accounting Building

The project package will be available on January 21, 2009 at the Governor's CIP Administrator's Office, Building No. 1356, Mednilla Avenue, Capitol Hill. A $70.00 non-refundable fee for the project package will be assessed. All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001. Public Law 15-95 Local Prefference Act, as ammended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid the current minimum wage as required by the CNMI and Federal laws.

There will be a mandatory Pre-bid Conference/Site Visit for this project on February 02, 2009, 9:00 a.m., local time, at the Secretary of Finance Building Parking Lot, Capitol Hill. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on February 02, 2009 to Mr. Carl Castro, Project Coordinator, Building No. 1356, Mednilla Avenue, Capitol Hill, Saipan, or fax to (670) 664-2408.

Sealed bids must be marked **"ITB09-GOV-037"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 4:00 p.m. local time, February 06, 2009. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 4:00 p.m. local time February 06, 2009, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than February 06, 2009 and must be received no later than February 17, 2009. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, February 19, 2009. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will opened at 10:00 a.m. local time, on February 10, 2009.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) a bid bond of fifteen percent (15 %) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be a Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". Surety companies must hold a certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price. The surety company providing the Performance and Payment bonds must be authorized to conduct business in the CNMI and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of each bond. Performance time for completion of this project is Sixty **(60)** calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be greater of (i) one hundred dollars **($100.00)**, or (ii) two percent (2%) of the contract price divided by sixty (60) calendar days, the contract time and will be accessed as delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ Eloy S. Inos, Secretary of Finance
Department of Finance

/s/ Herman S. Sablan, Director
Procurement and Supply, DOF

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
PA/HMGP/CIP PROGRAM – OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel.: (670) 664-2371 • Fax: (670) 664-2408

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
RFQ09-GOV-042

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR PROVISION OF ARCHITECT AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

702 CIP Project Managers

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez through the Office of Capital Improvement (collectively, "Commonwealth") are soliciting Statements of Qualifications from architect and engineers to provide project manager services for designated federally funded projects.

The Commonwealth has current needs for project manager services and is anticipating additional requirements during the 2009 and 2010 calendar years. Specific project assignments are dependent upon needs of the Commonwealth and may include oversight of: project planning; permitting; design; construction activities; and close-out.

Selected architects and engineers ("Project Managers") will be retained as independent contractors under the general supervision of the Contracting Officer or his designee. Project Managers will act as agent of the expenditure authority on assigned capital projects to ensure that identified objectives are achieved within: cost; time; and legal requirements; while maintaining effective stakeholder communications. Selected Project Managers will be retained on a one-year contract with an option to renew for an additional year at discretion of the Commonwealth.

Compensation for project manager services will be determined based on the required project management services for each assigned project. The Commonwealth will negotiate with selected Project Managers to determine the required scope of services for assigned responsibilities. Individuals or firms selected to serve as project managers would be precluded from providing any other services associated with the assigned project.

Interested parties may pick up the applicable scope of work and submittal requirements ("Scope of Work and Submittal Requirements") at the Office of Capital Improvement 1356 Mednilla Ave. Capitol Hill, Saipan, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4: 30 p.m. - Monday through Friday, except holidays). Submittal of all qualifications must precisely follow the submittal requirements identified in the Scope of Work and Submittal Requirements. A pre-proposal conference is schedule for this RFQ on January 26, 2009 at 9 a.m. in the Governor's Conference Room Capitol Hill. All submitted documents must follow submittal requirements.

Selection of individuals for the provision of services shall be guided by the Commonwealth Department of Finance Division of Procurement& Supply, Procurement Regulations § 7070-30.3-305. Five copies of qualifications should be submitted to the Commonwealth Division of Procurement & Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, MP 96950 in a sealed envelope marked "Project Manager Qualifications RFQ09 – GOV - 042."

Qualifications must be received prior to noon of January 30, 2009 ("Closing Date") from individuals or firms residing within the Commonwealth. Individuals or firms residing outside the Commonwealth may receive an additional five (5) calendar days from the Closing Date for receipt of their qualifications, upon filing a notice of intent to submit qualifications ("Notice of Intent") with the Division of Procurement & Supply by 11:00 a.m. local time January 27, 2009.

Notice of Intent may be transmitted in any of the following forms: direct delivery; transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515; or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com; however, the individual or firm transmitting a Notice of Intent bears all risk of proper functioning of equipment. For proposers located outside the CNMI who have filed a Notice of Intent, all required documents must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Services or the official government postal service of the foreign country no later than the Closing Date and must be received no later than five calendar days after the Closing Date.

Statements of Qualifications will be evaluated and scored based on the following factors:
1. Past experience as a project manager – 35%
2. References – 30%
3. Interview – 35%

Interviews will be conducted with the individuals who are determined to have the most appropriate qualifications for the needs of the Commonwealth. Architect and engineering firms may submit qualifications, however, they must identify qualifications of specific individuals who are to be considered for the provision of these services and evaluation of qualifications will be based on the experience, references, and interview of the designated individual.

This project is funded through grants from the United States Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) with local matching funds. Contract award is contingent upon approval from DOI.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so would be in the best interest of the government. All submitted documents shall become the property of the Commonwealth.

WORLD RESORT
SAIPAN

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: January 1, 2009 CLOSING DATE: Until Filled

Saipan World Resort is seeking for a professional Training Assistant Manager to work in a busy hotel industry. Salary and benefits are commensurate with the responsibilities to the successful candidate and in compliance to the CNMI laws.

POSITION TITLE: Training Assistant Manager
SALARY: $2,000.00/Month

NATURE OF WORK:

This position is located within the Department of Human Resources, Saipan World Resort. The incumbent is charged with the responsibility of conducting appropriate assigned workshops and trainings to increase worker's effectiveness on the job, improve morale, and prepare new employees to do jobs for which they are not trained. The incumbent is also charged with the responsibility to research, develop and to put together findings into some type of meaningful and effective training package. The incumbent is supervised by the Manager of Human Resources.

MINIMUM QUALIFCATIONS:

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a BA degree in education, plus five (5) years of actual training experience in hotel industry, of which two (2) years must be teaching/training in resort hotel business.

Interested individuals may pick up an application from the Security Office, Saipan World Resort. Interested applicants must submit their application, resume, educational credentials, police clearance addressed to the following:

Miriam K. Seman, Manager
Human Resources Department
Saipan World Resort
P.O. Box 500066 Saipan, MP 96950

James, Williams lead Cavs to win over Blazers

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP)—LeBron James had 34 points and 14 assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers held off the Portland Trail Blazers for a 104-98 victory on Wednesday.

Mo Williams added a season-high 33 points, including a career-high six 3-pointers for the Cavaliers. Cleveland made 11 of 19 3-point attempts.

Brandon Roy had 23 points for Portland, and LaMarcus Aldridge finished with 21.

Cleveland, which led by as many as 11 points in the first half, took a 68-59 lead when James hit two consecutive 3-pointers in the third quarter.

But Portland went ahead 82-81 midway through the fourth quarter on Roy's layup and free throw. Ben Wallace got the lead back for the Cavaliers with a layup, and James hit a 3-pointer.

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) is defended by Portland Trail Blazers' Brandon Roy (7) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Wednesday Jan. 21, 2009.

Lakers 108, Clippers 97

At Los Angeles, Andrew Bynum scored a career-high 42 points and Kobe Bryant had his second triple-double in three games as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Clippers.

Bynum became the first Lakers player to reach 40 points other than Bryant since Shaquille O'Neal scored 48 against Boston on March 21, 2003.

The 21-year-old center shot 17-of-24 from the floor and 8-of-11 from the foul line, and pulled down 15 rebounds.

Bryant, playing in pain two days after dislocating his right ring finger, added 18 points, 10 rebounds and 12 assists for his 16th career triple-double. He hadn't had a triple-double since April 1, 2005, before accomplishing the feat last Friday night in a 109-103 loss to Orlando.

Pistons 95, Raptors 76

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Tayshaun Prince scored 12 of his 25 points in the third quarter to help Detroit beat Toronto.

The Pistons used Richard Hamilton as a reserve after the All-Star shooting guard started his first 611 games, including the playoffs, in his seven seasons with the team.

Chris Bosh had 19 points for the Raptors, who have lost seven straight.

Rodney Stuckey scored 17 points and Jason Maxiell had season highs in points (16) and rebounds (11) for Detroit. Allen Iverson scored 11 and reserve Antonio McDyess had 10 points and eight rebounds.

Celtics 98, Heat 83

At Miami, Eddie House scored 20 points in the second quarter, finishing with 25 as Boston downed Miami to extend its winning streak to six games.

Ray Allen scored a game-high 27 for the Celtics, who were a season-high 15-for-25 from 3-point range. It matched the most 3s ever allowed by the Heat in their 21 seasons. Kevin Garnett had 16 points and 13 rebounds, and Paul Pierce added 14 points for Boston.

Dwyane Wade finished with 25 points, Daequan Cook scored 20 and Michael Beasley added 17 points and 11 rebounds for Miami.

Bucks 133, Mavericks 99

At Milwaukee, Charlie Villanueva had 32 points and 10 rebounds and Michael Redd added 27 points as Milwaukee downed Dallas.

The Bucks didn't have Andrew Bogut for the fourth straight game due to back spasms.

Dallas gave up midway through the fourth, with coach Rick Carlisle taking out both Jason Kidd, who finished with 18 points, and Dirk Nowitzki who had 30.

Rockets 108, Jazz 99

At Houston, Yao Ming had 19 points and 12 rebounds and Rafer Alston scored 23 as Houston beat Utah for its sixth win in seven games.

Von Wafer added 21 points, including a pivotal 3-pointer in the closing minutes, and Luis Scola had 19 points and nine rebounds for the Rockets.

Deron Williams had 32 points and 11 assists and Ronnie Brewer had 23 for the Jazz, who've dropped seven of their last 10 road games. Andrei Kirilenko sat out for Utah after leaving Tuesday's game against Minnesota with a right ankle injury.

Knicks 114, Suns 109

At New York, Nate Robinson made up for a momentum-shifting technical foul with 20 points for New York, and Tim Thomas scored all 10 of his points in the first five minutes of the fourth quarter.

New York held Shaquille O'Neal to just one field goal in the second half after he had 18 points in the first.

David Lee led the Knicks with 25 points and 16 rebounds.

Hornets 102, Nets 92

At New Orleans, Chris Paul narrowly missed his fifth triple-double of the season with 29 points, nine rebounds and eight assists as New Orleans beat New Jersey.

Peja Stojakovic had 20 points and 10 rebounds for New Orleans. Rasual Butler added 14 points, Julian Wright had 11 points and James Posey 10.

Vince Carter scored 20 for the Nets, who lost their fourth straight. Bobby Simmons scored 16 points for the Nets and Keyon Dooling added 12.

Wizards 110, Kings 107

At Sacramento, California, Antawn Jamison had 33 points and nine rebounds to help Washington hold on for the victory over Sacramento.

Trailing by 19 points entering the fourth quarter, the Kings showed some life.

Point guard Beno Udrih led the way, finding holes in the defense on drives to the basket and hitting outside shots. Udrih's 3-pointer with 43 seconds left cut the lead to 104-102.

Bobcats 101, Grizzlies 86

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Raja Bell scored 25 points, and Emeka Okafor added 20 points and 15 rebounds as Charlotte continued its improved play with a win over Memphis.

Raymond Felton scored 19 and Gerald Wallace had 13 points and nine rebounds for the Bobcats.

Rudy Gay had 26 points for the Grizzlies.

Thunder 122, Warriors 121

At Oakland, California, Jeff Green scored 26 points, including a turnaround jump shot from 16 feet at the buzzer to lift Oklahoma City over Golden State.

Westbrook matched his season high of 30 points while Kevin Durant added 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Thunder.

Stephen Jackson had 29 points and seven assists for Golden State, while Corey Maggette added 26 points and six rebounds.

Serena, Nadal advance at Australian open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—Serena Williams ignored pain and frustration to reach the third round of the Australian Open with a straight-sets win over Gisela Dulko.

The second-seeded Williams' 6-3, 7-5 victory Thursday was far from routine, unlike Rafael Nadal's 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 win over Croatia's Roko Karanusic.

Williams, hoping to extend a sequence of winning the Australian title every alternate year since 2003, had to fend off six set points in the ninth game of the second set to prevent the match from going to a third set. That game went to a dozen deuces before Williams broke to get back on serve.

She had a brace removed from her left ankle in the changeover and, although grimacing with pain, held and then broke Dulko again—this game going to deuce a half-dozen times—to get her chance to serve it out.

After all that, the nine-time Grand Slam winner finished with ace on her first match point, advancing in 1 hour, 50 minutes.

"It was a very tough second set, she started playing unbelievable, hitting winners left and right," Williams said. "She had a couple of opportunities but I always felt I wasn't going to lose.

Williams converted only four of her 18 break chances against the 23-year-old Argentine. Dulko was successful on both of hers.

"She definitely isn't known for the game she played today," Williams said. "But I'm used to people really playing and taking it to me now.

"It definitely helps you to get match tough and be ready for the next person that's, you know, obviously going to take it to me."

Williams graded her performance a "D-minus."

Nadal had an easier time in his second-round match against Karanusic, fending off the bearded Croat's six break-point chances and converting on six of the seven opportunities he had.

"The result is good. I think I won without problems, no?" the 22-year-old Spaniard said.

He will next play German veteran Tommy Haas, who beat Flavio Cipolla of Italy 6-1, 6-2, 6-1.

Nadal has won four straight French Open titles on clay, had a breakthrough win over Roger Federer on grass at Wimbledon last year and led the tour in 2008 with a 46-10 record on hard courts. But he has never made a final at the Australian or U.S. Opens - the two majors on hard courts.

"When you think you win in Toronto, you win in Olympics, I have Montreal, I have Madrid, I have Indian Wells in this kind of surface," Nadal said. "When you have these tournaments playing against the best players of the world ... Why you can't win a Grand Slam in hard court, no?

"Hopefully in this year have a chance for win here or for win in the U.S. Open."

No. 13 Fernando Gonzalez of Chile, the 2007 runner-up, moved on with a 7-5, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Argentina's Guillermo Canas.

Also advancing were No. 6 Gilles Simon, No. 12 Gael Monfils, No. 14 Fernando Verdasco, No. 17 Nicolas Almagro, No. 22 Radek Stepanek, No. 24 Richard Gasquet and No. 31 Jurgen Melzer also went through.

Dudi Sela was the first Israeli man to make the third round of a major since 1994 when he beat Romania's Victor Hanescu 6-3, 6-3, 6-2.

Mario Ancic beat fellow Croatian Ivo Karlovic 5-7, 7-5, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, knocking out the No. 25th seed.

On the women's side, Olympic champion Elena Dementieva improved her 2009 winning streak to 12 matches with 6-4, 6-1 win over Iveta Benesova.

Dementieva, who won titles at Auckland and Sydney before the season's first major, struggled with her serve early but recovered to finish the match in 72 minutes.

The 27-year-old Dementieva reached the French Open and U.S. Open finals in 2004, beaten both times by fellow Russians, and has not returned to the championship of a Grand Slam tournament since.

Her highlight last year was a win over fellow Russian Dinara Safina in the gold medal match at the Beijing Olympics. She was ousted in the semifinals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open in 2008 and has never advanced beyond the fourth round at Melbourne Park.

Amelie Mauresmo, who won here and at Wimbledon in 2006, rallied for a 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 win over Britain's Elena Baltacha. Mauresmo, a former No. 1 now seeded 20th after an injury-plagued 2008, advanced when Baltacha double-faulted on match point.

Fellow Frenchwoman Virginie Razzano ousted No. 14 Patty Schnyder of Switzerland 6-3, 6-1.

Other women advancing included No. 12 Flavia Pennetta of Italy, No. 13 Victoria Azarenka of Belarus, No. 18 Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia, No. 21 Anabel Medina Garrigues of Spain and China's Zheng Jie, seeded 22nd.

Patriots' Brady, in interview, says rehab going well

TORONTO (AP)—New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady said in an interview Wednesday that his rehabilitation from season-ending knee surgery was "going really well," but he did not offer any timetable for a return to the football field.

In some of his first public comments since being injured in the first quarter of the regular season opener in September, Brady also told Toronto sports radio station The Fan 590 that he did not think the Patriots would be hurt badly by the defections of key personnel such as offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels and Scott Pioli, the team's former vice president of player personnel.

Brady was not asked during the interview if he expected to be ready for training camp or the start of the 2009 regular season. Nor was he asked about ongoing speculation that his recovery from surgery has been slowed by a post-operative infection in his left knee.

"It's going really well," said Brady of his rehab. "Anyone who's come back from injuries that require surgery knows it's just a process and there are some good days, some bad days and you just have to keep plugging through them."

Brady was operated on Oct. 6 in Los Angeles and confirmed on his Web site a couple of weeks later that he had a second procedure after developing an infection.

In the interview, in which Brady promoted a sports cream, the 2007 NFL MVP described himself as the Patriots "biggest cheerleader" after the injury. He said he watched every game and shared the team's disappointment in missing the playoffs with an 11-5 record.

He also noted that the Patriots defeated the NFC's representative in the Super Bowl, the Arizona Cardinals, by 40 points (47-7 on Dec. 21).

Brady said he was confident the team would make improvements in the offseason to try to get back to the playoffs, and he downplayed the departures of Pioli and McDaniels.

McDaniels was hired as coach of the Denver Broncos and Pioli general manager of the Kansas City Chiefs.

"There's change every year and you have to get used to it," he said, adding that the team's ownership and head coach remain intact.

MLB BRIEFS

Ex-NL MVP Jeff Kent to announce retirement at 40

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jeff Kent plans to announce his retirement from baseball on Thursday at Dodger Stadium. Kent spent 17 years in the major leagues and leaves as the career home-run leader among second basemen with 351, 74 more than Ryne Sandberg. He spent the last four seasons with the Dodgers, hitting .291 with 122 doubles, 75 homers and 311 RBIs. Los Angeles issued a statement Wednesday announcing the news conference. A five-time All-Star and the 2000 NL MVP, Kent hit .253 during the first half of last season, improved to .353 in August, then injured his knee on Aug. 29 and had surgery four days later. He returned to make the postseason roster, but was relegated to a bench role. He went a combined 0-for-9 with four strikeouts during the two playoff series and became a free agent in November. He'll be replaced at second base by Blake DeWitt, who took over when Kent was sidelined. Kent had a .290 career batting average, 377 homers, 1,518 RBIs and a .500 slugging percentage. He was drafted by Toronto in 1989 and also played for the New York Mets, Cleveland, San Francisco and Houston.

Markakis' $66.1M deal finalized by Orioles

BALTIMORE (AP)—Right fielder Nick Markakis' $66.1 million, six-year contract was finalized Wednesday by the Baltimore Orioles. The agreement covers three years the 25-year-old would have been eligible for arbitration and the first three after he would have been eligible for free agency. Markakis hit a career-high .306 with 20 homers and 87 RBIs for the Orioles last season, his third in the majors. He played in 157 games, drew 99 walks and led all AL outfielders with 17 assists. His deal calls for a $2.1 million signing bonus: $1 million payable upon approval and $1.1 million in April 2010. Markakis gets $3 million this season, $6.75 million in 2010, $10.25 million in 2011, $12 million in 2012 and $15 million each in 2013 and 2014. The deal includes a $17.5 million mutual option for 2015. He would get a $2 million buyout if the club declines but no buyout if he turns it down—which would reduce the total value of the agreement to $64.1 million. Orioles officials and Markakis planned a Thursday news conference to discuss the deal.

NFL BRIEFS

Cardinals to wear home jerseys in Super Bowl

PITTSBURGH (AP)—The Pittsburgh Steelers will wear their white road uniforms against Arizona in the Super Bowl, just as they did when they defeated Seattle for the NFL title three years ago in Detroit. The Cardinals, as the home team, chose to wear their red home jerseys in the Feb. 1 game in Tampa. In the February 2006 Super Bowl, the Steelers had the option of wearing their black home jerseys, but elected to wear white after playing and winning three road playoff games in as many weeks. This will be only the third time in their seven Super Bowls the Steelers will wear white. They also wore white while defeating Minnesota in the Super Bowl during the 1974 season.

Titans QB replacing Favre in Pro Bowl

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Titans quarterback Kerry Collins will make his second Pro Bowl trip as a replacement for Brett Favre. Philip Rivers of San Diego was the first alternate in the AFC. But it will be Collins as the second alternate joining Peyton Manning and Jay Cutler as the AFC's quarterbacks in the Pro Bowl on Feb. 8. Collins' previous Pro Bowl trip was in 1996. He threw for 2,676 yards with 12 touchdowns and seven interceptions with a passer rating of 80.2 this season in helping the Titans go 13-3, the league's best record. He will have company from the Titans in Hawaii. Defensive tackle Albert Haynesworth, safety Chris Hope, cornerback Cortland Finnegan, running back Chris Johnson and left tackle Michael Roos also are on the AFC roster. Center Kevin Mawae was voted to the team, but will miss the game because of a torn left triceps tendon.

Jets introduce Rex Ryan as new coach

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. (AP)—Making one bold declaration after another, Rex Ryan gave his vision for the New York Jets: a Super Bowl trophy and a White House visit. "With all the cameras and all that, I was looking for our new president back there," Ryan said with a big, bright smile Wednesday, moments after being introduced as the team's head coach. "You know," he added, "I think we'll get to meet him in the next couple years anyway." Whoa! Talk about putting pressure on yourself. After all, this is a franchise that hasn't been to a Super Bowl since his father, Buddy, was an assistant on the 1969 champions. "I'm not afraid of expectations," the 46-year-old Ryan said. "My goal is to win a Super Bowl. It's not to just win X number of games." And that sounded like the perfect game plan to an excited Woody Johnson. "Why else are we here?" the Jets owner asked. "Yee-haw! That's good." Ryan, Baltimore's defensive coordinator the last four seasons, said all the right things in meeting with the media for the first time since being hired Monday to replace the fired Eric Mangini.

NEW ELECTRONICS!
26" LCD TV
$24.95 /week
NEW APPLIANCES!
Kenmore WASHER
Starting at $15.95 /week
Start the New Year!
KARAOKE SYSTEMS
Starting at $9.95 /week
WASHER
Starting at $12.95 /week
AIRCONDITION 12000 BTU
Starting at $15.95 /week
This is a rent to own transaction. You do not own the product until all rental payments are made or purchase is made. See store for HUGE selection!
DIAL Rent-to-Own
NO CREDIT CHECKS!
NO REPAIR BILLS!
NO LONG TERM OBLIGATIONS!
AGANA Marine Corps Dr. 477-RENT Reserved Parking in Rear
DEDEDO Calvo's Center 637-RENT Behind Johndel's Supermarket
SAIPAN Middle Road 234-RENT Next to Subway

32 teams sign up for 2009 season

A total of 32 teams have so far signified their intentions to participate in the upcoming 2009 season of Saipan Little League Baseball.

SLLB president Mike Borja yesterday announced that there would be a meeting of team managers, coaches, umpires, and technical officials tomorrow, Jan. 24, to discuss the final preparations for the seemingly fruitful season.

Borja said all pertinent documents would be distributed to the different teams during the meeting, which will start at 9am at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Included in the agenda will be the preparations for the opening ceremonies, which is scheduled on Valentine's Day.

Borja said he expects that all the teams will be paying the entry fee of $500 on Saturday.

The teams that have confirmed to join included 15 for the Major Division, five for the Juniors Division, six for the Seniors Division, and six for the Big League Division.

Borja said all the defending champions in each division are expected to field in their roster of players, including the Patriots (Majors), Kagman Lions (Juniors), Jets (Seniors), and Tanapag (Big League).

SLLB originally set an early date (Jan. 10) for the opening but due to several but minor issues, they opted to return to the traditional starting month of February.

The SaipanCell Patriots are aiming for their fourth consecutive title this year.

Another upcoming event would be the CNMI District Tournament, which Saipan will be hosting in June.

After the district meet, which will feature the All-Star teams from Saipan, Tinian, and hopefully Rota, the CNMI bets will go to Hong Kong for the Junior, Senior, and Big League divisions of the 2009 Asia Pacific Regional Tournament late June. Indonesia will host the Majors qualifier.

Teams that will win in the regional meet will compete in the World Series.

Last year, Saipan swept the district meet, but only the Big League All-Stars competed in the World Series in Easley, South Carolina and came home winless in the tournament.

For more information on SLLB, contact Borja at 322-0340 or 285-1980. ***(Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)***

Basic Referee Training Clinic to start next week

The NMIFA Referee Committee will hold a Basic Referee Training Clinic starting next week. The classroom venue will be the NMIFA office, 3rd floor, TSL Plaza, Garapan. Field venue is yet to be announced.

The Jan. 29 schedule will be from 6pm to 8pm and will serve as an introduction to the course.

It continues on Jan. 30, also during the same time with the field instruction part of the course set the next day on Jan. 31 from 8am to 12 and 1:30pm to 4pm.

The Basic Referee Training Clinic resumes a week later on Feb. 7 with the question-and-answer portion of the course plus an examination. The final day of the course will be from 9am to 11am (field) and 1pm to 4pm (classroom).

Anyone age 14 and older who is interested in learning the laws of the game is invited to attend. Certification will allow attendees to referee in youth games, and with added experience, then referee higher levels including high school, women's and men's leagues. Interscholastic coaches and school referees are encouraged to attend.

"Football has spread like wildfire in the CNMI, and good officials are always needed to support the many leagues. We welcome young people, parents, and players to attend the clinic to learn the laws of the game and give back by becoming an official for NMIFA. Refereeing gives you the opportunity to learn more about the game, and in turn, teach others so everyone can enjoy the sport more," said Catherine Perry Anderson, NMIFA Referee Committee member. ***(PR)***

LADY

From Page 36

good start, drilling nine markers in the first period, which ended with Mt. Carmel ahead by five, 17-12.

The Lady Dolphins were held to four field goals in the first period, and could have taken the driver's seat if not for their poor free throw shooting. MHS went only 3-for-10 from the foul line.

Lebria was still unstoppable in the second half, adding 10 more points, while Calvo and Ryanne Camacho chipped in three and two markers, respectively, to keep Mt. Carmel in front at halftime, 31-26.

There was a reversal of fortunes for MCS and MHS in the second half. The Lady Dolphins found their mark and outscored the Lady Knights in the third period, 20-7, to grab the upperhand, 46-38.

Jacque Wonenberg, who was scoreless in the first half, led the Dolphins' uprising in the third period by firing eight points. She teamed up with Lalaine Pagarao, who nailed all her six markers in the third canto, while three other players made two points each.

The Dolphins never looked back from there, despite the efforts of Lebria and Calvo to bring the lead back to Mt. Carmel.

After the MHS took a 55-45 lead, with less than three minutes left in the fourth period, the Lady Knights launched a short 5-0 run on a Lebria triple and Calvo's layup to cut the lead to five, 50-55, going into the last two minutes of the game.

But timely baskets from Wonenberg, Jeneque Benavente, and Tacliad foiled the Knights bid to regain the lead and hand MHS its first loss.

Tacliad top-scored for the Lady Dolphins with 15 points, while Wonenberg contributed 10, scoring in double figures for the second straight time. Wonenberg made 12 points in MHS' 48-43 win over Kagman last week.

Lebria exploded for a season-high 36 points, but she had only Calvo helping her carried the load for the Knights. Calvo had eight points. Lebria and Calvo were the only two MCS players to make more than one field goal against MHS.

MHS 61 – Tacliad 15, Wonenberg 10, Guzman 9, Palero 8, Pagarao 6, Padilla 2, Caress 2.

MCS 52 – Lebria 36, Calvo 8, Oiarte 2, Camacho 2, Tudela 2, Ada 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-17, 31-26, 46-38, 61-52.

CRUZ

From Page 36

were Ted Malaran (148), Fred Cataluna (150), Rey Ferraz (151), Leo Ganacias (157), and Nono Bostre (162).

Asked to assess his game, Cruz said almost all of the players did not execute well last weekend.

"In the second day, my first five holes was not good enough but I eventually recovered the rest of the way," he said.

Cruz said that his game was superior from the rest of the field from sixth to the 18th hole, despite a no-birdie round.

"I had chances in four times for birdie but it just keep hitting near the hole," he said.

Cruz will continue to savor the victory on his upcoming one-week business trip to the Philippines.

As if the 2008 championship was not enough, Cruz also took home the January Ace title last Sunday with his net score of 69, followed again by Reyes with his 72. Malaran (72), Jojo Geva (72), William Retardo (73), Ganacias (75), Jhun Ortiz (75), Cataluna (77), Rodrigo Nimes (78), Matutino Adony (79), Joe Miranda (80), Manny Po (80), Rey Ferraz (81), Jhun Calma (82), Nestor Siruelo (84), Manny Corcuera (85), Bostre (87), Richard Meimban (91), and new member Orly De Leon (129) completed the list of participants for the January bash.

LUCKY

From Page 36

the top individual award for a student-athlete in the CNMI.

First on the list is junior tennis player and MHS' Ji Hoon Heo, who was named Student Athlete of the Month for January after playing for the ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team in Australia.

Heo, the lone CNMI junior player to gain Junior ITF ranking points, defeated seeded foes Down Under becoming the highest placed player on his team after reaching the semifinals of a tournament in Wodonga.

Another junior tennis player is on the list with Saipan International School's Rafael Jones taking the February plum after winning the 13-and-under division title of the NMITA Coconut Classic Championships.

Swimming's Kai Staal claimed the March honors, as he secured the High Point award in the SSC International Swim Meet. Staal also prevailed in the 2,500m swim in the 30th Annual SSC Oceania Swim and after a few weeks participated in the relay race in XTERRA Saipan Championships and Tagaman Triathlon.

The SIS student was the third male out of the water and fifth overall besting pro athletes in XTERRA.

Staal won two more monthly honors, getting NMASA members' votes in November and December.

In November, he led SIS to a successful title defense in the high school division of the All Schools Swim Meet on top of making two age group (13 to 14-years old) records.

The following month, Staal left an impressive mark in Guam, setting three age group records besides winning two gold medals, four silver, and a bronze.

Christian Miller of Whispering Palms is the third tennis player to be nominated for the 2008 Male Student Athlete of the Year Award after earning the Male Student Athlete of the Month plum in April. Miller was cited for his singles and doubles wins in the CNMI Junior Championships.

Staal's teammate in Tsunami Saipan, Saipan Community School's Kensuke Kimura, is also on the list after taking the May honors.

Kensuke shattered the CNMI age group record (11 to 12) in the 200m breaststroke when he competed in the Guam Championships, where he also won one gold medal, two silver, and three bronze.

Athletics' Trevor Ogumoro of Kagman High School won a bronze in high jump and a silver in octathlon during the 2008 Oceania Championships, which Saipan hosted in June.

Having contributions in the CNMI medal haul in the regional meet allowed Ogumoro to win the June plum and earned a nomination for the season-ending award.

Soccer's Caleb Arriola is also a nominee after winning the July title. Arriola of SIS was the goalie for the CNMI U14 National Team that stood its ground against the veteran players of Chinese-Taipei, Guam, Hong Kong, North Korea, and Macao during the EAFF U14 Football Festival in Guam.

Count youth bowler and Southern High School Raphael Zapanta in the selection after securing the August award. Of Saipan Bowling Association's 12 monthly roll-offs, Zapanta won eight of them.

The ninth nominee is MHS and basketball's Jericho Cruz, who played for the CNMI Junior National Team in the 2008 Oceania Youth Tournament in Guam. He was the top scorer of the tournament and helped the CNMI win against Papua New Guinea and Palau.

The winner of the 2008 Male Student Athlete of the Year will be decided on Feb. 5 during NMASA's monthly meeting.

FIELDS

From Page 36

approved grant of $145,000, Palacios Baseball Field will get a major upgrade to satisfy the LG Twins, a Korean professional team, and keep them coming for their annual winter training. That's the kind of federal intervention we need!

Another Korean professional team, the Lotte Giants, is now at Kan Pacific Field in Marpi. A new practice infield is being installed to accommodate their needs. Talking to their manager last year, he informed me that they preferred coming here over Hawaii and Arizona due to the proximity of Saipan to Korea.

These professional teams are a welcome shot to our beleaguered economy. While they are a positive contribution, the real boost would be if we could get more of the Korean teams so that could play exhibition games prior to their regular season. That would bring millions into the economy due to media and fans arriving, which is why places in Florida and Arizona bend over backwards to accommodate major league teams.

I salute MVA for their efforts in attracting Korean baseball teams.

The major stumbling block is that Saipan has only two baseball fields, which means that we can only accommodate two teams right now. More quality fields and practice facilities would open us to more teams. Of course, that would take more money and flat land, two commodities in short supply.

I remain convinced that sports and eco-tourism represent a viable solution to our economic well-being. Of course, if we can tap into the Russian and Chinese market, that represents a vast potential that could test our capacity to handle huge numbers. What a nice problem that would be to have!

This week Pacific Islands Club is at peak occupancy. They are doing an especially excellent job in attracting Russians. They don't even need to sponsor sporting events to get them to come.

But as for Japanese tourists, we must be extra creative and aggressive to get more of them. Inviting running clubs, such as what happened last week, is one way of getting people to come and enjoy the best of Saipan, which are sun and sky and nature.

The ZDM club came with 45 runners, all of them elderly, some with osteoporosis. For them, it was a crowning achievement near the end of their lives. It was heartwarming to see the smiles on their faces at the finish line. They received certificates of completion and T-shirts forever commemorating their accomplishment.

They smiled at me as I took their picture. And I smiled back.

SPORTS BRIEFS

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	35	9	.795	_
Philadelphia	20	21	.488	13 1/2
New Jersey	19	23	.452	15
New York	17	24	.415	16 1/2
Toronto	16	28	.364	19

Southeast Division

Orlando	33	8	.805	_
Atlanta	25	16	.610	8
Miami	22	19	.537	11
Charlotte	17	25	.405	16 1/2
Washington	9	32	.220	24

Central Division

Cleveland	32	8	.800	_
Detroit	24	17	.585	8 1/2
Milwaukee	21	24	.467	13 1/2
Chicago	18	25	.419	15 1/2
Indiana	15	27	.357	18

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	28	13	.683	_
New Orleans	26	13	.667	1
Houston	27	16	.628	2
Dallas	24	18	.571	4 1/2
Memphis	11	30	.268	17

Northwest Division

Denver	28	15	.651	_
Portland	25	17	.595	2 1/2
Utah	25	18	.581	3
Minnesota	13	27	.325	13 1/2
Oklahoma City	9	34	.209	19

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	33	8	.805	_
Phoenix	23	17	.575	9 1/2
Golden State	13	30	.302	21
Sacramento	10	33	.233	24
L.A. Clippers	9	32	.220	24

Yesterday's Games

Charlotte 101, Memphis 86
Boston 98, Miami 83
New York 114, Phoenix 109
Detroit 95, Toronto 76
Milwaukee 133, Dallas 99
New Orleans 102, New Jersey 92
Houston 108, Utah 99
Washington 110, Sacramento 107
Cleveland 104, Portland 98
L.A. Lakers 108, L.A. Clippers 97
Oklahoma City 122, Golden State 121

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

MISO STANDINGS

Boys

MHS	2	0
KHS	1	1
SSHS	0	2

Girls

MHS	3	0
KHS	2	1
SSHS	0	2
MCS	0	2

2008 Saipan Bowling Association Banquet

Photos by ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The qualifiers in the stepladders finals for the 2008 Budweiser King of the Lanes tournament are joined by Saipan Bowling Association president Jerry Tan, right, during the awards ceremony Sunday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

SBA treasurer Ross Zapanta delivers a brief message before the start of the awards cemony.

The Top 6 finishers in the Budweiser Queen of the Lanes season finale roll-off pose with SBA president Jerry Tan.

Top-ranked bowlers for 2008 Yho Villavicencio, left, and Raymond Zapanta.

Budweiser Queen of the Lanes Emi Williams.

Sixth placer Elena Soll, is congratulated by SBA president Jerry Tan.

Budweiser King of the Lanes Raymond Angeles, left, smiles after receiving his trophy from SBA president Jerry Tan.

The Top 4 finishers in the Bing Prince/Princess of the Lanes tournament.

Fourth placer Ron Cal receives her check prize from SBA president Jerry Tan.

Eighth-time Bing Prince of the Lanes winner Raphael Zapanta, center, is joined by mother Gigi and SBA president Jerry Tan at the awards ceremony.

SBA president Jerry Tan hands over the runner-up trophy to Raul Dumapit.

James, Williams lead Cavs to win over Blazers

LeBron James had 34 points and 14 assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers held off the Portland Trail Blazers for a 104-98 victory on Wednesday.

32

Saipan Tribune
Sports

32 teams sign up for 2009 season

A total of 32 teams have so far signified their intentions to participate in the upcoming 2009 season of Saipan Little League Baseball.

34

Lady Dolphins survive Lady Knights

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Mount Carmel School stunned Marianas High School, but the Lady Dolphins recovered in time to escape with a 61-52 win in the varsity division of the 2008-2009 MISO Basketball League.

The Lady Knights caught the Dolphins off guard in the first half leading by as much as eight points, 27-19, but the Lady Dolphins worked their way back into the game midway in the third period and completed a come-from-behind win.

The victory was the third in a row for the Lady Dolphins, as they swept the first round of the two-round robin regular season.

The Lady Knights dropped to a 0-2 record after a second-half collapse, as the tandem of Nicole Lebria and Noelle Calvo could not help Mt. Carmel keep the lead in the last 16 minutes of play.

Lebria led the Lady Knights'

See LADY on Page 34

The Lady Dolphins' Ira Palero, right, beats Mt. Carmel's Noelle Calvo in this rebound play during their game in the varsity division of the MISO caging Wednesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

OFF THE BENCH

By BOB COLDEEN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Coldeen is a longtime journalist in the CNMI and is currently the news director of KSPN2

Fields of dream

Any time over five hundred people participate in any sporting event on Saipan, someone should take note. Okay, I'll do it.

The Winter Festival of Runs sponsored by Marianas Visitor's Authority attracted 533 runners aged 8 to 88, most of them coming from Japan.

For the record, I love Russian tourists. For what's it worth, I like them better than college football's Bowl Championship Series.

If only the Department of Homeland Security appreciated them as much we do.

News that a Russia-China visa waiver program could possibly take 12-18 months, and without any guarantee that it will even happen despite its significance to the lifeblood of the CNMI, means it's time to re-focus on Japan and Korea.

Thanks to a Department of the Interior, Office of Insular Affairs

See FIELDS on Page 34

Cruz ecstatic after winning his third Golfer of the Year

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After coming home empty handed the last eight years, Mike Cruz finally regained the Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year title last weekend in two separate golf venues on Saipan.

Cruz won the 2008 edition of the annual tournament after two days of taming the greens and fairways of the Kingfisher Golf Links and Marianas Resort and Country Club.

It was his third overall Golfer of the Year plum, following similar triumphs in the 1997 and 2000 editions of the event.

"It really proves that it was not just pure luck," kidded Cruz, who is the incumbent president of FILTAGA and one of its founding fathers.

Except for skipping last year's tournament, Cruz has been a qualifier for the Golfer of the Year tournament since 1993.

Cruz finished with a net score of 141, six strokes ahead of runner-up Senate President Pete Reyes (147).

Cruz was two strokes behind leader Rey Ferraz after the first day on Jan. 17 at the Talafofo golf course but bounced back after the second day at the Marpi venue on Jan. 18.

Completing the Top 7 finishers for the Golfer of the Year

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Mike Cruz holds up one of his past Fil-Taga Golfer of the Year trophies after winning the club's yearend tournament last weekend.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Lucky 9 vie for male student plum

Staal

Jones

Zapanta

Heo

Arriola

Ogumoro

Miller

Kimura

Cruz

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REPORTER

Members of the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association will be facing a tough task selecting the 2008 Male Student Athlete of the Year next month.

There are nine nominees—the most for the season, as the Male and Female Athletes of the Year have seven and eight, respectively, and the Female Student of the Year has eight nominees.

All nine made impressive accomplishments, which give them the equal rights to gain

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